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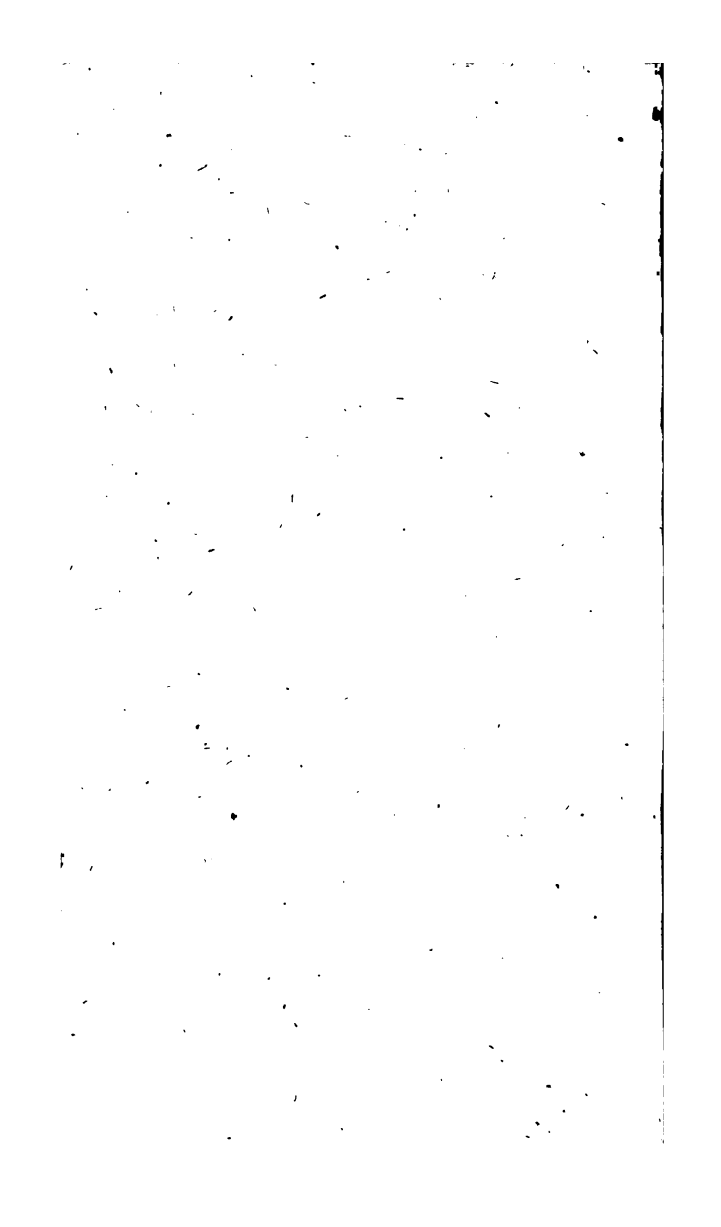
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VIDA's
ART of POETRY,

Translated into

ENGLISH VERSE,

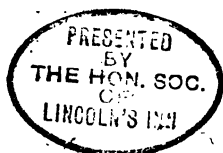
By Mr. PITT.

THE SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N:

Printed by JOHN HUGHS,
For ROBERT DODSLEY at Tully's Head
in Pall-Mall. 1742.



To the Right Honourable

P H I L I P,

Earl Stanhope, Viscount Mahon,
and Baron Elvafton,

T H I S

T R A N S L A T I O N

O F

VIDA'S Art of Poetry

I s D E D I C A T E D

By His LORDSHIP'S

Humble Servant

and Chaplain,

CHRISTOPHER PITT.

1900

THE LIFE OF

JOHN R. MONTAGUE

BY

JOHN R. MONTAGUE

AND

JOHN R. MONTAGUE



V I D A ' S

ART of POETRY, &c.

B O O K I.

G I V E me, ye sacred muses, to impart
 The hidden secrets of your tuneful art ;
 Give me your awful mysteries to sing,
 Unlock, and open wide, your sacred spring ;
 While from his infancy the bard I lead,
 And set him on your mountain's lofty head ;
 Direct his course, and point him out the road
 To sing in epick strains an hero or a god.
 What youth, whose gen'rous bosom pants for praise,
 Will dare with me to beat those arduous ways ?
 O'er high Parnassus' painful steep to go,
 And leave the grov'ling multitude below :
 Where the glad muses sing, and form the choir,
 While bright Apollo strikes the silver lyre.
 Approach thou first, great FRANCIS, nor refuse
 To pay due honours to the sacred muse ;
 While Gallia waits for thy auspicious reign,
 'Till age compleats the monarch in the man ;
 Mean time the muse may bring some small relief,
 To charm thy anguish, and suspend thy grief ;

While guilty fortune's stern decrees detain ...
 Thee, and thy brother in the realms of Spain ;
 Far, far transported from your native place,
 Your country's, father's, and your friend's embrace !
 Such are the terms the cruel fates impose
 On your great father, struggling with his woes,
 Such are their hard conditions :-----They require
 The sons, to purchase, and redeem the fire.
 But yet, brave youth, from grief, from tears abstain,
 Fate may relent, and heav'n grow mild again ;
 At last perhaps the glorious day may come,
 The day that brings our royal exile home ;
 When, to thy native realms in peace restor'd,
 The ravish'd crowds shall hail their passing lord ;
 When each transported city shall rejoice,
 And nations bless thee with a publick voice ;
 To the throng'd fanes the matrons shall repair ;
 Absolve their vows, and breathe their souls in pray'r.
 'Till then, let ev'ry muse engage thy love,
 With me at large o'er high Parnassus rove,
 Range every bow'r, and sport in ev'ry grove.

First then observe, that verse is ne'er confin'd
 To one fixt measure, or determin'd kind ;
 Tho' at its birth it sung the gods alone,
 And then religion claim'd it for her own ;
 In sacred strains address'd the deity,
 And spoke a language worthy of the sky ;
 New themes succeeding bards began to chuse,
 And in a wider field engag'd the muse ;
 The common bulk of subjects to rehearse
 In all the rich varieties of verse.

Yet

VIDA'S *Art of Poetry.*

Yet none of all with equal honours shine,
(But those which celebrate the pow'r divine,)
To those exalted measures, which declare
The deeds of heroes, and the sons of war.
From hence posterity the name bestow'd
On this rich present of the delphick god;
Fame says, Phœmonoe in this measure gave
Apollo's answers from the pythian cave.

But e'er you write, consult your strength, and chuse
A theme proportion'd justly to your muse.
For tho' in chief these precepts are bestow'd
On him who sings an hero or a god;
To other themes their gen'ral use extends,
And serves in different views to different ends.
Whether the lofty muse with tragick rage
Would proudly stalk in buskins on the stage;
Or in soft elegies our pity move,
And shew the youth in all the flames of love;
Or sing the shepherd's woes in humble strains;
And the low humours of contending swains:
These faithful rules shall guide the bard along
In every measure, argument, and song.

Before (whatever you propose to write)
Let the chief motive be your own delight,
And well-weigh'd choice; --- a task injoin'd refuse,
Unless a monarch should command your muse.
(If we may hope those golden times to see;
When bards become the care of majesty!)
Free and spontaneous the smooth numbers glide,
Where choice determines, and our wills preside;
But, at command, we toil with fruitless pain,
And drag th' involuntary load in vain.

Nor



VIRGIL'S *Art of Poetry*.

Nor, at its birth, indulge your warm desire,
On the first glimm'ring of the sacred fire ;
Defer the mighty task ; and weigh your pow'r
And every part in every view explore ;
And let the theme in different prospects roll
Deep in your thoughts, and grow into the soul.

But e'er with sails unfurl'd you fly away,
And cleave the bosom of the boundless sea ;
A fund of words and images prepare,
And lay the bright materials up with care,
Which, at due time, occasion may produce,
All rang'd in order for the poet's use.
Some happy objects by meer chance are brought
From hidden causes to the wand'ring thought ;
Which if once lost, you labour long in vain
To catch th' ideal fugitives again.

Nor must I fail their conduct to extol,
Who, when they lay the basis of the whole,
Explore the antients with a watchful eye,
Lay all their charms and elegancies by,
Then to their use the precious spoils apply.

At first without the least restraint compose,
And mould the future poem into prose ;
A full and proper series to maintain,
And draw the just connection in a chain ;
By stated bounds your progress to controul,
To join the parts, and regulate the whole.

And now 'tis time to spread the op'ning sails
Wide to the wanton winds and flatt'ring gales ;
'Tis time we now prescribe the genuine laws
To raise the beauteous fabrick with applause ;

But

But first some method requisite appears
 To form the boy, and mould his tender years.
 In vain the hard the sacred wreath pursues,
 Unless train'd up, and season'd to the muse.
 Soon as the prattling innocent shall reach
 To the first use and rudiments of speech,
 Ev'n then, by Helicon he ought to rove,
 Ev'n then the tuneful nine should win his love
 By just degrees. ----But make his guide your choice
 For his chaste phrase and elegance of voice;
 That he at first successfully may teach
 The methods, laws, and discipline of speech;
 Lest the young charge, mistaking right and wrong,
 With vitious habits prejudice his tongue;
 Habits, whose subtle seeds may mock your art,
 And spread their roots and poison thro' his heart.
 Whence none shall move me to approve the wretch,
 Who wildly born above the vulgar reach,
 And big with vain pretences to impart
 Vast shows of learning, and a depth of art,
 For sense th' impertinence of terms affords;
 An idle cant of formidable words;
 The pride of pedants, the delight of fools;
 The vile disgrace, and lumber of the schools;
 In vain the circling youths, a blooming throng,
 Dwell on th' eternal jargon of his tongue.
 Deluded fools! ----The same is their mistake,
 Who at the limpid stream their thirst may slake,
 Yet choose the tainted waters of the lake. }
 Let no such pest approach the blooming care,
 Deprave his style, and violate his ear;

But

to *V I D A's Art of Poetry.*

But far, oh far, to some remoter place
Drive the vile wretch to teach a barb'rous race.

Now to the muse's stream the pupil bring,
To drink large draughts of the pierian spring;
And from his birth the sacred bard adore,
Nurft by the nine, on Mincio's flow'ry shore;
And ask the gods his numbers to inspire,
With like invention, majesty, and fire.
He reads Ascanius' deeds with equal flame,
And longs with him to run at nobler game.
For youths of ages past he makes his moan,
And learns to pity years so like his own;
Which with too swift, and too severe a doom,
The fate of war had hurri'd to the tomb.
His eyes, for Pallas, and for Lausus, flow,
Mourn with their fires, and weep another's woe.
But when Euryalus, in all his charms,
Is snatch'd by fate from his dear mother's arms,
And as he rolls in death, the purple flood
Streams out, and stains his snowy limbs with blood,
His soul the pangs of gen'rous sorrow pierce,
And a new tear steals out at every verse.
Mean time with bolder steps the youth proceeds,
And the greek poets in succession reads;
Seasons to either tongue his tender ears;
Compares the heroes glorious characters;
Sees, how Æneas is himself alone,
The draught of Peleus' and Laertes' son;
How, by the poet's art, in one, conspire
Ulysses' conduct, and Achilles' fire.

But now, young bard, with strict attention hear,
And drink my precepts in at either ear;

Since

Since mighty crowds of poets you may find,
 Crowds of the grecian, and aulonian kind,
 Learn hence what bards to quit or to pursue,
 To shun the false, and to embrace the true ;
 Nor is it hard to call each noble piece,
 And point out every glorious son of Greece ;
 Above whose numbers HOMER sits on high,
 And shines supreme in distant majesty ;
 Whom with a rev'rent eye the rest regard,
 And owe their raptures to the sov'reign bard ;
 Thro' him the god their panting souls inspires,
 Swells every breast, and warms with all his fires.
 Blest were the poets with the hallow'd rage,
 Train'd up in that, and the succeeding age :
 As to his time each poet nearer drew,
 His spreading fame in just proportion grew.
 By like degrees the next degenerate race
 Sunk from the height of honour to disgrace.
 And now the fame of Greece extinct lies,
 Her ancient language with her glory dies.
 Her banisht princes mourn their ravish'd crowns,
 Driv'n from their old hereditary thrones ;
 Her drooping natives rove o'er worlds unknown,
 And weep their woes in regions not their own ;
 She feels thro' all her states the dreadful blow,
 And mourns the fury of a barb'rous foe.

But when our bards brought o'er th'aonian maids
 From their own Helicon to Tyber's shades ;
 When first they settled on Hesperia's plains,
 Their numbers ran in rough unpolish'd strains.
 Void of the grecian art their measures flow'd ;
 Pleas'd the wild satyrs, and the sylvan crowd.

Low shrubs, and lofty forests whilom rung,
 With uncouth verse, and antiquated song;
 Nor yet old Ennius sung in artless strains,
 Fights, arms, and hosts embattel'd on the plains,
 Who first aspir'd to pluck the verdant crown
 From grecian heads, and fix it on his own.
 New wonders the succeeding bards explore,
 Which slept conceal'd in nature's womb before;
 Her awful secrets the bold poet sings,
 And sets to view the principles of things;
 Each part was fair, and beautiful the whole,
 And every line was nectar to the soul.
 By such degrees the verse, as ages roll'd,
 Was stamp'd to form, and took the beauxcops mould.
 Ausonia's bards drew off from every part
 The barb'rous dregs, and civiliz'd the art.
 'Till like the day, all shining and serene,
 That drives the clouds, and clears the gloomy scene,
 Refines the air, and brightens up the skies,
 See the majestic head of VIRGIL rise;
 Phœbus' undoubted son!----who clears the rust
 Of the rough ancients, and shakes off their dust.
 He on each line a nobler grace bestow'd;
 He thought, and spoke in every word a god.
 To grace this mighty bard, ye muses, bring
 Your choicest flow'rs, and rife all the spring;
 See! how the Grecian bards, at distance thrown,
 With rev'rence bow to this distinguish'd son;
 Immortal sounds his golden lines impart,
 And nought can match his genius but his art.
 Ev'n Greece turns pale, and trembles at his fame,
 Which shades the lustre of her HOMER's name.

'Twas

V I D A ' S *Art of Poetry.*

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'Twas then Ausonia saw her language rise
In all its strength, and glory to the skies;
Such glory never could she boast before,
Nor could succeeding poets make it more.
From that blest period the poetick state
Ran down the precipice of time and fate;
Degenerate souls succeed, a wretched train,
And her old fame at once drew back again.
One, to his genius trusts, in ev'ry part,
And scorns the rules and discipline of art.
While this, an empty tide of sound affords,
And roars and thunders in a storm of words.
Some, musically dull; all methods try
To win the ear with sweet stupidity;
Unruffled strains for solid wit dispense,
And give us numbers, when we call for sense.
'Till from th' hesperian plains and Tyber chas'd,
From Rome the banish'd sisters fled at last;
Driv'n by the barb'rous nations, who from far
Burst into Latium with a tide of war.
Hence a vast change of their old manners sprung,
The slaves were forc'd to speak their master's tongue;
No honours now were paid the sacred muse,
But all were bent on mercenary views;
'Till Latium saw with joy th' aonian train
By the great MENDOTA restor'd again;
Th' illustrious MENDOTA, of tuscan-race,
Were born to cherish learning in disgrace,
New life on every science to bestow,
And hush the cries of Europe in her woe.
With pity they beheld those turns of fate,
And prop'd the ruins of the grecian state;

B

For

For lest her wit should perish with her fame,
 Their care supported still the angive name;
 They call'd th' espousing youth from distant parts,
 To plant Aulonia with the grecian arts,
 To bask in ease, and science to diffuse,
 And to restore the amprity of the muse;
 They sent to ravag'd provinces with care,
 And cities wasted by the rage of war,
 To buy the ancients works, of deathless fate,
 And snatch th' immortal labours from the flame;
 To which the foes had doom'd each glorious piece,
 Who reign and lord it in the realms of Greece.
 (But we, ye gods, would raise a foreign lord,
 As yet untaught to sheath the civil sword)
 Thro' many a period this has been the fate,
 And this the list of the poetick state.

Hence sacred VIRGIL from thy soul adorn
 Above the rest, and to thy utmost power
 Pursue the glorious paths he struck before;
 If he supplies not all your wants, peruse
 Th' immortal strains of each augustan muse.
 There stop---nor rashly seek to know the rest,
 But drive the dire ambition from thy breast,
 'Till riper years and judgment form thy thoughts
 To mark their beauties, and avoid their faults.

Mean time, ye parents, with attention hear,
 And thus advis'd exert your utmost care
 The blameless tutor from a thousand choose,
 One from his soul devoted to the muse;
 Who pleas'd the tender pupil to improve,
 Regards, and loves him with a father's love.

Youth

Youth of it self, to num'rous ills betray'd,
Requires a prop, and wants a foreign aid;
Unless a master's rules his mind incline
To love and cultivate the sacred nine,
His thoughts a thousand objects will employ,
And from Parnassus lead the wand'ring boy.
So trusts the swain; the saplings to the earth;
So hopes in time to see the sprouting birth;
Against the winds defensive props he forms,
To shield the future forest from the storms,
That rash imbolden'd plant at length may rise
In verdant pride, and shoot into the skies.

But let the guide, if e'er he would improve
His charge, avoid his hate, and win his love;
Left in his rage wrong measures he may take,
And leash the muses for the teacher's sake.
His soul then slacken'd from her native force,
Flags at the barrier, and forgets the course.
Nor by your anger be the youth a' draw'd,
But scorn th' ungentle province of the rod;
Th' offended muses never can sustain
To hear the shriekings of the tender train,
But stung with grief and anguish hang behind;
Damp't is the sprightly rigor of the mind.
The boy no daring images inspire,
No bright ideas set his thoughts on fire;
He drags on heavily th' ungrateful load,
Grown obstinately dull, and season'd to the rod.

I know a pedant who to penance brought
His trembling pupils for the lightest fault;
His soul transported with a storm of ire,
And all the rage that malice could inspire;

By turns the tort'ring scourges we might hear,
 By turns the shrieks of wretches stun'd the ear.
 Still to my mind the dire ideas rise,
 When rage unusual sparkled in his eyes ;
 When with the dreadful scourge insulting loud,
 The tyrant terrifi'd the blooming crowd ;
 A boy the fairest of the frighted train,
 Who yet scarce gave the promise of a man,
 Ah, dismal object ! idly past the day
 In all the thoughtless innocence of play ;
 When lo ! th' imperious wretch inflam'd with rage,
 Fierce, and regardless of his tender age,
 With fury storms ; the fault his clamours urge ;
 His hand high-waving brandishes the scourge.
 Tears, vows, and pray'rs the tyrant's ears assail ;
 In vain ;----nor tears, nor vows, nor pray'rs prevail ;
 The trembling innocent from deep despair
 Sicken'd, and breath'd his little soul in air.
 For him, beneath his poplar, mourns the Po ;
 For him the tears of hoary *Serius* flow !
 For him their tears the watry fifters shed,
 Who lov'd him living, and deplor'd him dead !
 The furious pedant to restrain his rage,
 Should mark th' example of a former age ;
 How fierce Alcides, warm'd with youthful ire,
 Dash'd on his master's front his vocal lyre.
 But yet, ye youths, confess your master's sway,
 And their commands implicitly obey.

Whoever then this arduous task pursues,
 To form the bard, and cultivate his muse,
 Let him by softer means, and milder ways,
 Warm his ambition with the love of praise ;

V & A's Art of Poetry

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Soon as his precepts shall engage his heart,
And fan the rising fire in every part,
Light is the task ; — for then the eager boy
Pursues the voluntary toil with joy ;
Dismisses the ignominious indolence of rest,
And feeds th' immortal ardor in his breast.

And here the common practice of the schools
By known experience justifies my rules.
The youths in social studies to engage ;
For then the rivals burn with generous rage,
Each soul the stings of emulation rife,
And every little bosom beats for praise.
But gifts, propos'd will urge them best to rise ;
Fir'd at the glorious prospect of a prize,
With noble jealousy, the blooming bard

• Reads, labours, glows, and strains for the reward ;
Fears lest his happy rival win the race,
And raise a triumph on his own disgrace.

But when once season'd to the rage divine,
He loves and courts the raptures of the nine,
The senseless glory, and the love of fame,
Serve but as second motives to the flame ;
The thrilling pleasure all the hard labours,
Lock'd in the swift embraces of the muse.

See ! whil' harsh parents force the youth to quit,
For meaner arts, the dear delights of wit,
If e'er the winter want with his thoughts inspire,
And with past pleasures set his mind on fire ;
How from his soul he longs, but longs in vain,
To haunt the groves and purling streams again !

No stern commands of parents can controul,
No force can check the sallies of his soul.

So

So burns the courser season'd to the rein,
That spies his females on a distant plain,
And longs to act his pleasures o'er again;
Fir'd with remembrance of his joys, he bounds,
He foams and strives to reach the well-known grounds;
The goring spurs his furious flames improve,
And rouse within him all the rage of love;
Ply'd with the scourge he still neglects his haste,
And moves reluctant, when he moves at last;
Reverts his Eye, regrets the distant mare;
And neighs impatient for the dappled fair.

How oft' the youth would long to change his fate,
Who high advanc'd to all the pomp of state,
With grief his gawdy load of grandeur views,
Lost at too high a distance from the muse!
How oft' he sighs by warbling streams to rove,
And quit the palace for the shady grove!
How oft' in Tybur's cold retreats to lye,
And gladly stoop to chearful poverty,
Beneath the rigor of the wintry sky!
But yet how many curse their fruitless toil,
Who turn and cultivate a barren soil?
This, e'er too late, the master may divine
By a sure omen, and a certain sign;
The hopeful youth, determin'd by his choice,
Works without precept, and prevents advice,
Consults his teacher, plies his task with joy,
And a quick sense of glory fires the boy.
He challenges the croud;----the conquest o'er,
He struts away the victor of an hour.
Then vanquish'd in his turn; o'erwhelm'd with care,
He weeps, he pants, he sickens with despair;

Not

Nor looks his little rivals in the face;
But flies for shelter to some lonely place,
To mourn his shame, and cover his disgrace.
His master's frowns impatient to sustain,
Strait he returns, and wins the day again.
This is the boy his better fates design
To rise the future darling of the nine;
For him the maies weave the sacred crown,
And bright Apollo claims him for his own.
Not the least hope th' unactive youth can raise,
Dead to the prospect, and the sense of praise;
Who your just rules with dull attention hears,
Nor lends his understanding, but his ears.
Resolv'd his parts in indolence to keep,
He lulls his drowsy faculties asleep;

The wretch your best endeavours will betray,
And the superfluous care is thrown away.

I fear for him, who ripens e'er his prime;

For all productions there's a proper time.

Oh! may no apples in the spring appear,

Out-grow the seasons, and prevent the year;

Nor mellow yet, 'till autumn stains the vine,

And the full presses foam with floods of wine.

Torn from the parent-tree too soon, they lye

Trod down by every swain who passes by.

Nor should the youth too strictly be confin'd,

'Tis sometimes proper to unbend his mind;

When tir'd with study, let him seek the plains,

And mark the homely humours of the swains;

Or pleas'd the toils to spread, or horns to wind,

Hunt the fleet mountain-goat, or forrest-hind.

Mean

Mean time the youth, impatient that the day
 Should pass in pleasures unimprov'd away,
 Escals from the shouting crowd, and quits the plain;
 To sing the *Syrian* gods in rural strains:
 Or calls the *musics* to *Albano's* shades,
 Courts, and enjoys the *silken* *stade*.
 So labour'd fields with crops abstracted blest,
 By turns, lie fallow, and indulge their rest;
 The swain contented bids the hungry soil
 Enjoy a sweet vicissitude from toil;
 Till Earth renews her genial powers to bear,
 And pays his prudence with a bounteous year.
 On a strict view your solid judgment frame,
 Nor think that genius is in all the same;
 How oft' the youth who wants the sacred fire,
 Fondly mistakes for genius his desire?
 Courts the *gay* *muses*, tho' rejected still,
 Nor nature second his misguided will:
 He strives, he toils, with unavailing care;
 Nor heav'n relents, nor *Phœbus* heeds his *gay* *care*.
 He with success, perhaps, may plead a cause,
 Shine at the bar, and flourish by the laws;
 Perhaps discover nature's secret springs,
 And bring to light th' originals of things.
 But sometimes precept will such force impart,
 That nature beads beneath the power of art.
 Besides, 'tis no light province to remove
 From the soft boy the fiery pangs of love;
 'Till ripe in years, and more confirm'd in age,
 He learns to bear the flames of *Cupid's* rage;
 Off' hidden fires on all his vitals prey,
 Devour the youth, and melt his soul away

By

VIDA'S Art of Poetry.

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By slow degrees;----blot out his golden dreams,
The tuneful poets, and castalian streams;
Struck with a secret wound, he weeps and sighs;
In every thought the darling phantoms rise;
The fanci'd charmer swims before his sight,
His theme all day, his vision all the night:
The wand'ring object takes up all his care;
Nor can he quit th' imaginary fair.
Mean time his fire, unconscious of his pain,
Applies the temper'd medicines in vain;
The plague, so deeply rooted in his heart,
Mocks every slight-attempt of Pagan's art;
The flames of Cupid all his breast inspire,
And in the lover's quench the poet's fire.

When in his riper years, without controul,
The nine have took possession of his soul;
When, sacred to their god, the crown he wears,
To other authors let him bend his cares;
Consult their styles, examine every part,
And a new tincture take from every art.
First study TULLY's language and his sense,
And range that boundless field of eloquence.
TULLY, Rome's other glory, still affords
The best expressions and the richest words;
As high o'er all in eloquence he stood,
As Rome o'er all the nations she subdued.
Let him read men and manners, and explore
The site and distances from shore to shore;
Then let him travel, or to maps repair,
And see imagin'd cities rising there;
Range with his eyes the earth's fictitious ball,
And pass o'er figur'd worlds that grace the wall.

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Some

Some in the bloody shock of arms appear,
 To paint the native horrors of the war;
 Thro' charging hosts they rush before they write,
 And plunge in all the tumult of the fight.
 But since our lives contracted in their date
 By scanty bounds, and circumscrib'd by fate,
 Can never launch thro' all the depths of arts,
 Ye youths, touch only the material parts;
 There stop your labour, there your search controul,
 And draw from thence a notion of the whole.
 From distant climes when the rich merchants come,
 To bring the wealth of foreign regions home,
 Content the friendly harbours to explore,
 They only touch upon the winding shore;
 Nor with vain labour wander up and down
 To view the land, and visit every town;
 That would but call them from their former road,
 To spend an age in banishment abroad;
 Too late returning from the dang'rous main,
 To see their countries and their friends again.

Still be the sacred poets your delight,
 Read 'em by day, consult 'em in the night;
 From those clear fountains all your raptures bring,
 And draw for ever from the muses spring.
 But let your subject in your bosom rell,
 Claim every thought, and draw in all the soul.
 That constant object to your mind display,
 Your toil all night, your labour all the day.

I need not all the rules of verse disclose,
 Nor how their various measures to dispose;
 The tutor here with ease his charge may guide
 To join the parts and numbers, or divide.



3. .



V. I D. N.'s *Art of Poetry.*

Th' impatient bard, with all his nerves appli'd,
Tries all the avenues on every side ;
Resolv'd and bent the precipice to gain ;
Tho' yet he labours at the rock in vain ;
By his own strength and heav'n, with conquest trac'd,
He wins th' important victory at last ;
Stretch'd by his hands the vanquish'd monster lies,
And the proud triumph lifts him to the skies.
But when ev'n chance and all his efforts fail,
Nor toils, nor vigilance, nor cares prevail ;
His past attempts in vain the boy renews,
And waits the softer seasons of the muse ;
He quits his work ; throws by his solid desires ;
And from his task reluctantly retires.

Thus o'er the fields the swain pursues his road,
'Till stopt at length by some impetuous flood,
That from a mountain's brow, o'ercharg'd with rains,
Bursts in a thund'ring tide, and foams along the plains ;
With horror chill'd, he traverses the shore,
Sees the waves rise, and hears the torrent roar ;
Then griev'd returns ; or waits with vain delay,
'Till the tumultuous deluge rolls away.

But in no Iliad let the youth engage
His tender years, and unexperienc'd age ;
Let him by just degrees and steps proceed,
Sing with the swains, and tune the tender reed :
He with success an humbler theme may ply,
And, VIRGIL-like, immortalize a fly ;
Or sing the mice, their battles and attacks,
Against the croaking natives of the lakes ;
Or with what art her toils the spider sets,
And spins her filmy entrails into nets.

And

And here embrace, ye teachers, this advice ;
 Not to be too inquisitively nice,
 But, till the soul enlarg'd in strength appears,
 Indulge the boy, and spare his tender years ;
 'Till to ripe judgment and experience brought,
 Himself discerns and blushes at a fault ;
 For if the critic's eyes too strictly pierce,
 To point each blemish out in every verse,
 Void of all hope the stripling may depart,
 And turn his studies to another art.
 But if resolv'd his darling faults to see,
 A youth of genius should apply to me,
 And court my elder judgment to peruse
 Th' imperfect labours of his infant muse ;
 I should not scruple with a candid eye,
 To read and praise his poem to the sky ;
 With seeming rapture on each line to pause,
 And dwell on each expression with applause,
 But when my praises had inflam'd his mind,
 If some loose verse limp'd slowly up behind ;
 One, that himself, unconscious, had not found,
 By numbers charm'd, and led away by sound ;
 I should not fear to minister a prop,
 And give him stronger feet to keep it up ;
 Teach it to run along more firm and sure ;
 Nor would I show the wound before the cure.

For what remains ; the poet I enjoin
 To form no glorious scheme, no great design,
 'Till free from business he retires alone,
 And flies the giddy tumult of the town ;
 Seeks rural pleasures, and enjoys the glades,
 And courts the thoughtful silence of the shades,

Where the fair dryads haunt their native woods,
With all the orders of the sylvan gods.

Here in their soft retreats the poets lye,
Serene, and blest with chearful poverty ;
No guilty schemes of wealth their souls molest,
No cares, no prospects discompose their rest ;
No scenes of grandeur glitter in their view ;
Here they the joys of innocence pursue,

• And taste the pleasures of the happy few.

From a rock's entrails the barbarian sprung,
Who dares to violate the sacred throng

By deeds or words----The wretch, by fury driv'n,
Assaults the darling colony of heav'n !

Some have look'd down, we know, with scornful eyes
On the bright muse who taught 'em how to rise,
And paid, when rais'd to grandeur, no regard
From that high station to the sacred bard.

Uninjur'd, mortals, let the poets lye,
Or dread th' impending vengeance of the sky ;

The gods still listen'd to their constant pray'r,
And made the poets their peculiar care.

They, with contempt on fortune's gift look down,
And laugh at kings who wear an envy'd crown.

Rais'd and transported by their soaring mind,
From their proud eminence they view mankind
Lost in a cloud ; they see them toil below,

All busy to promote their common woe.

Of guilt unconscious, with a steady soul,
They see the lightnings flash, and hear the thunders roll.

When girt with terrors, heav'n's almighty fire
Launches his triple bolts, and forked fire,

When

When o'er high tow'rs the red destroyer plays,
And strikes the mountains with the pointed blaze ;
Safe in their innocence, like gods, they rise,
And lift their souls serenely to the skies.

Fly, ye profane ;---the sacred nine were giv'n
To bless these lower worlds by bounteous heav'n :
Of old, Prometheus, from the realms above,
Brought down these daughters of all-mighty Jove,
When to his native earth the robber came,
Charg'd with the plunder of ethereal flame.
As due compassion touch'd his gen'rous mind,
To see the savage state of human kind ;
When led to range at large the bright abodes,
And share th' ambrosial banquets of the gods ;
In many a whirl he saw Olympus driv'n,
And heard th' eternal harmony of heav'n.
Turn'd round and round the comfort charm'd his ears
With all the musick of the dancing spheres ;
The sacred nine his wond'ring eyes behold,
As each her orb in just divisions roll'd ;
The thief beholds them with ambitious eyes,
And, bent on fraud, he meditates the prize ;
A prize ! the noblest gift he could bestow
(Next to the fire) on human race below ;
At length th' immortals reconcil'd, resign'd
The fair celestial sisters to mankind ;
Tho' bound to Caucasus with solid chains,
Th' aspiring robber groan'd in endless pains ;
By which deterr'd, for ages lay supine
The race of mortals, nor invoc'd the nine :
'Till heav'n in verse shew'd man his future state,
And open'd every distant scene of fate.

First, the great father of the gods above
 Sung in Dedona and the libyan grove ;
 Next, to th' enquiring nations Themis gave
 Her sacred answers from the phœcian cave ;
 Then Phœbus warn'd 'em from the delphic dome,
 Of future times, and ages yet to come ;
 And rev'rend Faunus utter'd truths divine
 To the first founders of the latian line.

Next the great race of hallow'd prophets came,
 With them the sibyls of immortal fame,
 Inspir'd with all the god ; who rapt on high
 With more than mortal rage unbounded fly,
 And range the dark recesses of the sky.
 Next at their feasts, the people sung their lays,
 (The same their prophets sung in former days)
 Their theme an hero, and his deathless praise.

What has to man of nobler worth been giv'n,
 Than this the best and greatest boon of heav'n ?
 Whatever pow'r the glorious gift bestow'd,
 We trace the certain footsteps of a god ;
 By thee inspir'd, the daring poet flies,
 His soul mounts up, and tow'rs above the skies ;
 Thou art the source of pleasure, and we see
 No joy, no transport, when debarr'd of thee ;
 Thy tuneful deity the feather'd throng
 Confess in all the measures of their song.
 Thy great commands the salvages obey,
 And every silent native of the sea :
 Led by thy voice the starting rocks advance,
 And list'ning forests mingle in the dance.
 On thy sweet notes the damn'd rejoice'd to dwell,
 Thy strains suspended all the din of hell ;

Lull'd

Lull'd by the sound the furies rag'd no more,
And hell's infernal porter ceas'd to roar.
Thy pow'r exalt us to the realms above,
To feast with gods, and sit the guests of Jove !
Thy presence softens anguish, woe and strife,
And reconciles us to the load of life ;
Hail, thou bright comfort of these low abodes,
Thou joy of men and darling of the gods.
As priest and poet in these humble lays,
I boldly labour to resound thy praise ;
To hang thy shrines this gift I bring along,
And to thy altars guide the tender throng.

The END of the FIRST BOOK.



V I D A ' s

ART of POETRY, &c.

B O O K · II.

PROCEED, ye nine, descended from above,
 Ye tuneful daughters of all-mighty Jove ;
 To teach the future age I hasten on,
 And open every source of Helicon.

Your priest and bard with rage divine inspire,
 While to your shrine I lead the blooming choir.
 Hard was the way, and dubious, which we trod,
 Now show, ye goddesses, a surer road ;
 Point out those paths, which you can find alone,
 To all the world, but to yourselves unknown ;
 Lo ! all the hesperian youths with me implore
 Your softer influence, and propitious pow'r,
 Who, rang'd beneath my banners, boldly tread
 Those arduous tracks to reach your mountain's head.
 New rules 'tis now my province to impart ;
 First to invent, and then dispose with art ;
 Each a laborious task : but they who share
 Heav'n's kinder bounty, and peculiar care,
 A glorious train of images may find,
 Preventing hope, and crowding on the mind.

The

The other task to settle every part,
Depends on judgment, and the pow'rs of art ;
From whence in chief the poet hopes to raise
His future glory, and immortal praise.

This as a rule the noblest bards esteem,
To touch at first in gen'ral on the theme ;
To hint at all the subject in a line ;
And draw in miniature the whole design.
Nor in themselves confide ; but next implore
The timely aid of some celestial pow'r ;
To guide your labours, and point out your road,
Choose, as you please, your tutelary god ;
But still invoke some guardian deity,
Some pow'r, to look auspicious from the sky :
To nothing great should mortals bend their care,
'Till Jove be solemnly address'd in pray'r.
'Tis not enough to call for aid divine,
And court but once the favour of the nine ;
When objects rise, that mock your toil and pain,
Above the labour and the reach of man ;
Then you may supplicate the blest abodes,
And ask the friendly succour of the gods.
Shock not your reader, nor begin too fierce,
Nor swell and bluster in a pomp of verse ;
At first all needless ornament remove,
To shun his prejudice, and win his love.
At first, you find most favour and success
In plain expression, and a modest dress.
For if too arrogant you vaunt your might,
You fall with greater scandal in the fight,
When on the nicest point your fortune stands,
And all your courage, all your strength demands.

With

With gradual flights surprize us as we read ;
 And let more glorious images succeed,
 To wake our souls ; to kindle our desire
 Still to read on, and fan the rising fire,
 But ne'er the subject of your work proclaim
 In its own colours, and its genuine name ;
 Let it by distant tokens be convey'd,
 And wrapt in other words, and cover'd in their shade.
 At last the subject from the friendly shroud
 Bursts out, and shines the brighter from the cloud ;
 Then the dissolving darkness breaks away,
 And every object glares in open day.
 Thus great *Ulysses' toils were I to choose,
 For the main theme that should employ my muse ;
 By his long labours of immortal fame,
 Should shine my hero, but conceal his name ;
 As one, who lost at sea, had nations seen,
 And mark'd their towns, their manners, and their men,
 Since Troy was level'd to the dust by Greece ;
 'Till a few lines epitomiz'd the piece.

But study now what order to maintain,
 To link the work in one continu'd chain,
 That when the muse displays her artful scheme,
 And at the proper time unfolds the theme ;
 Each part may find its own determin'd place,)
 Laid out with method, and dispos'd with grace ;
 That to the destin'd scope the piece may tend,
 And keep one constant tenor to the end.
 First to surprizing novelties inclin'd,
 The bards some unexpected objects find,
 To wake attention, and suspend the mind.

}

A cold

* Vid. *Hom. Odysf.* Lib. I.



A cold dull order bravely they forsake ;
 Fixt and resolv'd the winding way to take,
 They nobly deviate from the beaten track.
 The poet marks th' occasion, as he sings,
 To launch out boldly from the midst of things,
 Where some distinguish'd incident he views,
 Some shining action that deserves a muse.
 Thence by degrees the wond'ring reader brings
 To trace the subject backward to its springs,
 Left at his entrance he should idly stay,
 Shock'd at his toil, and dubious of his way ;
 For when set down so near the promis'd goal,
 The flatt'ring prospect tempts and fires his soul ;
 Already past the teach'ers bounds appear,
 Then most at distance, when they seem so near ;
 Far from his grasp the fleeting harbour flies,
 Courts his pursuit, but mocks his dashed eyes ;
 The promis'd region he with joy had spy'd,
 Vast tracts of oceans from his reach divide ;
 Still must he backward steer his lengthen'd way,
 And plough a wide interminable sea.
 No skilful poet would his muse employ,
 From Paris' vote to trace the fall of Troy,
 Nor ev'ry deed of Hector to relate,
 While his strong arm suspended Iliou's fate ;
 Work ! for some annalist ! some heavy fool,
 Correctly dry, and regularly dull.
 Best near the † end those dreadful scenes appear ;
 Wake then, and rouse the furies of the war.
 But for his ravish'd fair at first engage
 Peleides' soul in unrelenting rage.

Be.

† See *Homer's Iliad*.

Be this the cause that every phrygian flood
 Swells with red waves, and rolls a tide of blood ;
 That Xanthus' urns a purple deluge pour,
 And the deep trenches float with human gore.
 Nor former deeds in silence must we lose,
 The league at Aulis, and the mutual vows,
 The spartan raging for his ravisht spouse ;
 The thousand ships ; the woes which Ilium bore
 From Greece, for nine revolving years before.
 This † rule with judgment should the bard maintain,
 Who brings Laërtes' wand'ring son again,
 From burning Ilium to his native reign.
 Let him not launch from Ida's strand his ships,
 With his attendant friends into the deeps ;
 Nor stay to vanquish the ciconian host ;
 But let him first appear (his comrades lost)
 With fair Calypso on th' ogygian coast.
 From thence, a world of toils and dangers past,
 Waft him to rich Phæacia's realms at last,
 There at the feast his wand'rings to relate,
 His friends dire change ; his own relentless fate.
 But if the bard of former actions sings,
 He wisely draws from those remoter springs
 The present order, and the course of things.
 As yet unfold th' event on no pretence,
 'Tis your chief task to keep us in suspense.
 Nor tell what * presents Atreus' son prepares,
 To reconcile Achilles to the wars ;
 Or † by what god's auspicious conduct led,
 From Polyphemus' den Ulysses fled.

Pleas'd

† See *Odyssey*. * See *Iliad*. Lib. XIX. † *Odys.* 9.

Pleas'd with the toil, and on the prospect bent,
 Our souls leap forward to the wish'd event.
 No call of nature can our search restrain,
 And sleep, and thirst, and hunger plead in vain.
 Glad we pursue the labour we embrac'd,
 And leave reluctant, when we leave at last.
 See! how the bard, triumphant in his art,
 Sports with our passions, and commands the heart;
 Now here, now there he turns the varying song;
 And draws at will the captive soul along;
 Rack'd with uncertain hints, in every sense
 We feel the lengthen'd anguish of suspense.
 When * HOMER once has promis'd to rehearse
 Bold Paris' fight, in many a sounding verse,
 He soon perceives his reader's warm desire
 Wrapt in th' event, and all his soul on fire;
 The poet then contrives some specious stay,
 Before he tells the fortune of the day.
 'Till Helen to the king and elders show,
 From some tall tow'r, the leaders of the foe,
 And name the heroes in the fields below.
 † When chaste Penelope, to gain her end,
 Invites her suitors the tough bow to bend;
 (Her nuptial bed the victor's promis'd prize)
 With what address her various arts she plies!
 Skill'd in delays, and politickly slow
 To search her treasures for her hero's bow.
 None lead the reader in the dark along,
 To the last goal that terminates the song;
 Sometimes th' event must glance upon the fight,
 Not glare in day, nor wholly sink in night.

}

'Tis

* See *Iliad* 3.

† *Odyssey* 21.

'Tis thus Anchises to his son relates
 The various series of his future fates ;
 For this the * prophets see, on Tyber's shore,
 Wars, herid wars, and Latium red with gore,
 A new Achilles rising to destroy
 With boundless rage the poor remains of Troy ;
 But raise his mind with prospects of success,
 And give the promise of a lasting peace.
 This knew the hero when he fought the plains,
 Sprung||from his ships, and charg'd th' embattled swains,
 Hew'd down the latian troops with matchless might,
 (The first, auspicious omen of the fight,)
 And at one blow gigantick Theron kill'd,
 Bold, but in vain, and foremost of the field ;
 Thus too † Patroclus with his latest breath
 Foretold his unregarding victor's death :
 His parting soul anticipates the blow,
 That waits brave Hector from a greater foe.
 Thou too, poor Turnus, just before thy dooms
 Couldst read thy end, and antedate a tedious,
 When o'er thy head the baleful fury flew,
 And in dire omens set thy fate to view ;
 A bird obscene, the flutter'd o'er the field,
 And scream'd thy death, and beat thy sounding shield ;
 For lo ! the time, the fatal time is come,
 Charg'd with thy death, and heavy with thy doom.
 When Turnus, tho' in vain, shall rue the day ;
 Shall curse the golden belt he bore away ;
 Shall wish too late young Pallas' spoils unfought,
 And mourn the conquest he so dearly bought.

Th^e

* See *Virg. Æneid*. Lib. VI. || *Ibid*. Lib. III. v. 458.
 v. 890. † *Ibid*. Lib. V. v. 531.

Th' event should glimmer thro' its gloomy throwd,
Tho' yet confus'd, and struggling in the cloud.
So, to the trav'ler, as he journeys on:
To reach the walls of some far distant town;
If, high in air, the dubious turrets rise,
Peep o'er the hills, and dance before his eyes;
Pleas'd the refreshing prospect to survey,
Each stride he lengthens, and beguiles the way.
More pleas'd (the tempting scene in view) to go,
Than pensively to walk the gloomy vales below.

Unless the theme within your bosom roils,
Works in each thought, and runs through all the soul;
Unless you alter with incessant pain,
Pull down, and build the fabric o'er again;
In vain, when rival-wits your wonder raise,
You'll strive to match those beauties which you praise.

To one just scope with fixt design go on;
Let sov'reign reason dictate from her throne,
By what determin'd methods to advance,
But never trust to arbitrary chance.
Where chance presides, all objects wildly join'd,
Crowd on the reader, and distract his mind;
From theme to theme unwilling is he tost,
And in the dark variety is lost.

You see some bards, who bold excursions make
In long digressions from the beaten track;
And paint a wild unnecessary throng
Of things and objects foreign to the song;
For new descriptions from the road depart,
Devoid of order, discipline and art.
So; many an anxious toil and danger past,
Some wretch returns from banishment at last;

..... D With

With fond delay to range the shady wood,
 Now here, now there he wanders from the road;
 From field to field, from stream to stream he roves,
 And courts the cooling shelter of the groves.
 For why should HOMER † deck the gorgeous car,
 When our rais'd souls are eager for the war?
 Or dwell on ev'ry wheel, when loud alarms,
 And Mars in thunder calls the hosts to arms?
 When with his heroes we some dastard ‡ find,
 Of a vile aspect, and malignant mind;
 His awkward figure is not worth our care;
 His monstrous length of head, or want of hair,
 Not, tho' he goes with mountain shoulders by,
 Short of a foot, or blinking in an eye.
 Such trivial objects call us off too long
 From the main drift and tenor of the song.
 Drances * appears a juster character,
 In council bold, but cautious in the war;
 Factious and loud the list'ning throng he draws,
 And swells with wealth, and popular applause;
 But, what in our's would never find a place,
 The bold greek language may admit with grace.

Why should I here the stratagems recite,
 And the low tricks of ev'ry little wit?
 Some out of time their stock of knowledge boast,
 'Till in the pedant all the bard is lost.
 Such without care their useless lumber place;
 One black, confus'd, and undigested mass,
 With a wild heap encumbers every part,
 Nor rang'd with grace, nor methodiz'd with art.

But

† *Vid. Hom. Iliad*, Lib. V. | † *Ibid. Lib. II. v. 212.*
 v. 722. | * *Æne. Lib. XI. v. 336.*

But then in chief, when things abstruse they teach,
 Themes too abstracted for the vulgar reach ;
 The hidden nature of the deities ;
 The secret laws and motions of the skies ;
 Or from what dark original began
 The fiery soul, and kindled up the man :
 Oft' they in odious instances engage,
 And for examples ransack every age,
 With every realm ; no hero will they pass,
 But act against the rules of time and place.
 Avoid, ye youths, these practices, nor raise
 Your swelling souls to such a thirst of praise.
 Some bards of amaranth these are, we own,
 Who sing sometimes the journeys of the sun,
 The rising stars, and labours of the moon :
 What impulse bids the ocean rise and fall ;
 What motions shake and rock the trembling ball.
 Tho' foreign subjects had engag'd their care,
 The rage, the din and thunder of the war,
 Thro' the lone field ; the genius of the earth ;
 Or rules to raise the vegetable birth :
 Yet 'tis but seldom, and when time and place
 Require the thing, and reconcile to grace.
 Those foreign objects necessary learn,
 And flow, to all appearance, from the theme ;
 With so much art so well conceal'd they please,
 When wrought with skill, and introduc'd with ease.
 Should not † Anchises, such occasion shown,
 Resolve the questions of his god-like son ?
 If souls depriv'd of heav'n's fair light repair
 Once more to day, and breathe the vital air ?

D 2

Or

† Vid. *Æneid*. Lib. VI.

Or if from high Olympus first they came,
 Inspir'd with portions of ethereal flame;
 Tho' here encumber'd with this mortal frame?
 Tire not too long on a subject when you write,
 For 'tis variety that gives delight;
 But when to that variety inclin'd,
 You seek new objects to relieve the mind,
 Be sure let nothing forc'd or labour'd seem,
 But watch your time, and steal from off your theme;
 Conceal with care your longing to depart,
 For art's chief pride, is still to cover art;
 So † Mulciber, in satiate ages skill'd,
 Engrav'd Rome's glories on Etna's shield,
 On the bright orb her future fame carv'd,
 And with her triumphs charg'd the wifing gold;
 Here figur'd fights the blasing round adorn,
 There his long line of heroes yet unborn,
 But if a † poet of auspicious birth
 Describes the various kingdoms of the earth,
 Wide interspers'd the Medes, or swarthy Moors;
 The diff'rent natures of their soils explores,
 And paints the trees that bloom on India's shores;
 On his own land he looks with partial eyes,
 And lifts the fair Hesperia to the skies;
 To all the fair Hesperia he prefers,
 And makes the woods of Bacchus yield to hers;
 With proud Panchala, tho' her groves the boasts,
 And breathes a cloud of incense from her coasts.

Hear then, ye generous youths, on this regard
 I should not blame the conduct of the bard,

Who

† Virg. *Æneid*. Lib. VIII. } † Virg. *Georgic*. Lib. II.
 v. 626. } v. 136.

Who in soft numbers, and a flowing strain,
 Relieves and reconciles our ears again.
 When I the various implements had sung
 That to the fields, and rural trade belong,
 In sweet harmonious measures would I tell
 How * nature mourn'd when the great Cæsar fell,
 When Bacchus' curlings vines had grac'd my lays,
 The rural pleasures || next shou'd share my praise.
 The labour ended, and compleat the whole,
 Some bards with pleasure wander round the goal,
 The flights and sallies of the muse prolong,
 And add new beauties to the finish'd song;
 Pleas'd with th' excursion of the charming strain,
 We strive to quit the work, but strive in vain.
 Thus, were the bees the subject of my muse,
 Their laws, their natures, and celestial dews;
 Poor † Aristæus should his fate disclose,
 His mother's counsel should assuage his woes;
 Old Proteus here should struggle in his chain,
 There in soft verse the thracian bard complain;
 (As Philomela on a poplar's bough
 Bemoans her young, melodious in her woe.)
 Pangean sleeps his sorrows should return,
 And vocal Thrace with Rhodope should mourn;
 Hebrus should roll low-murm'ring to the deep,
 And barb'rous nations wonder why they weep.
 Thus too the poets, who the names declare
 Of kings and nations gath'ring to the war,
 Sometimes diversify the strain, and sing
 The wondrous change of the ‡ ligurian king.

D 3.

While

* *Georg.* Lib. I. v. 466.

|| *Ibid.* Lib. II. v. 458.

† *Ibid.* Lib. XI. v. 317.

‡ *Æneid.* Lib. X. v. 185.

While for his Phaëton his sorrows flow,
 And his harmonious strains beguile his woe,
 O'er all the man the snowy feathers rise,
 And in a tuneful swan he mounts the skies.
 Thus too || Hippolitus, by Dian's care
 And Pæan's art, returns to upper air.
 The bards now paint the arms their heroes wield,
 And each bold figure on the glitt'ring shield.
 Great † Aventinus, great Alcides' son,
 Wore the proud trophy which his father won;
 An hundred serpents o'er the buckler roll'd,
 And Hydra hiss from all her heads in gold.
 Now blooming Tempe's cool retreats they sing,
 And now with flow'ry beauties paint the spring.
 Now with a sylvan scene the floods they hide;
 Or teach the fam'd Eridanus to glide,
 Or sport on fabled Achelous' side. }
 Or hoary Nereus' num'rous race display,
 The hundred azure sisters of the sea,
 With them the nymphs that haunt their native woods,
 And the long orders of the sylvan gods.

With gay descriptions sprinkle here and there,
 Some grave instructive sentences with care,
 That touch on life, some moral good pursue,
 And give us virtue in a transient view;
 Rules, which the future fire may make his own,
 And point the golden precepts to his son.

Sometimes on little images to fall,
 And thus illustrate mighty things by small;
 With due success the licens'd poet dares,
 When to the § ants the phrygians he compares,

Wha

|| *Virg. Æneid. Lib. VII.* | † *Ibid. v. 656.* |
 v. 756. | § *Ibid. Lib. IX. v. 402.*

Who leaving Carthage, gather to the feast;
Of the laborious tyrians to the || bees.
Bat swarming † flies, offensive animals,
That buz incessant o'er the smoking pails,
Are images, too low, to paint the hosts
That roll and blacken o'er Ausonia's coasts.
The lofty muse who sung the latian war,
Would think such trivial things beneath her care.
How from his majesty would VIRGIL fall,
If Turnus, scarce repell'd from Ilion's wall,
Retiring grimly with a tardy pace,
Had e'er been figur'd by the patient & ass,
Whom unregarded troops of boys surround,
While o'er his sides their rattling strokes resound;
Slow he gives way, and crops the springing grain,
Turns on each side, and stops to graze again.
In every point the thing is just, we know,
But then the image is itself too low;
For Turpus, sprung from such a glorious strain,
The vile resemblance would with scorn disdain.
With better grace the † lion may appear,
Who singly impotent the crowd to dare,
Repel, or stand their whole embody'd war,
Looks grimly back, and rolls his glaring eye,
Despairs to conquer, and disdains to fly.
Since fictions are allow'd, before ye youths,
Your fictions wear at least the air of truths.
When * Glaucus meets Tydides on the plain,
Inflam'd with rage, and reeking from the slain;

Some

|| *Æneid*. Lib. I. v. 434. | † *Æneid*. Lib. IX. v. 792.
† *Iliad*. Lib. II. v. 469. | * *Homer's Iliad*. Lib. VI.
§ *Ibid*. Lib. XI. v. 557. | v. 119.

44. *Virgil's Art of Poetry.*

Some think they could not pass the time away,
In such long narratives, and cool delay,
Amidst the raging tumult of the day.

But yet we hear fierce Borneo relate
The crime of bold Lycargus, and his fate;
And Glaucus talks of brave Bellerophon,
Doom'd for a lawless passion not his own;
Sets forth the hero's great exploits to view,
How the bold chief the dice Chimæra slew,
The solymean host, and amazonian crew.

For those surprizing fictions are design'd
With their sweet falsehoods to delight the mind;
The bards expect no credit should be giv'n
To the bare eye, tho' authoriz'd by heav'n,
Which oft' with confidence they vent abroad,
Beneath the needful sanction of a god.

'Twas thus the † reast'd heifers of the sun
Spoke o'er the fire with accents not their own;
'Twas thus † Achilles' steed his filence broke,
And § trojan ships in human voices spoke;
As wrought by heav'n these wonders they relate,
All airy visions of the ivory gate!

Speak things but once, if order be your care,
For more the cloy'd attention will not bear,
And tedious repetitions tire the ear.

In this we differ from the grecian train,
Who tell || Atreides' visions o'er again.

'Tis not enough with them we know the cause
Why great Achilles from the war withdraws,

Unless

† *Homer. Odys.* Lib. XII. v. 395. | § *Virgil. Æneid.* Lib. X. ver. 228.
† *Iliad.* Lib. XVII. v. 426. || *Virg. Iliad.* Lib. II.

Uplifts the [†]weeping herd on the shore,
Tells his blue mother all we heard before.
So much as pious Quirinus did they stand,
That when their kings dispatch some high command,
All, word for word, the embassadors rehearse;
In the same tenor of unvaried verse.
Not so did || Venus from Arpi bring
The final answer of th' ætolian king.

Let others labour on a vast design,
A less, but, polish'd with due care, be thine.
To change its structure be your last delight;
Thus spend the day, and exercise the night,
Incessant in your toil. But if you choose
A larger field and subject for your muse;
If scanty limits should the theme confine,
Learn with just art to lengthen the design
Beyond its native bounds; the sowing-mind
A thousand methods to this end may find;
Unnumber'd fictions may with truths be join'd,
Nature supplies a fund of matter still;
Then cull the rich variety at will.
See! how the [‡]hard calls down th' embattled gods,
All rang'd in factions, from their bright abodes;
Who, fir'd with mutual hate, their arms employ,
And in the field declare for Græce or Troy;
'Till Jove converges a council to assuage
Their rising fury, and suspend their rage;
Tho' the blest gods, remov'd from human eyes,
Live in immortal ease within the distant skies.

And,

† *Hom. Iliad*, Lib. I. R. 170. 3. [‡] *All the particulars to the end of this paragraph, are taken from Homer.*
† *Ibid.* Lib. IX. v. 264.
‡ *Virg. Æneid*, Lib. XI. v. 111. *And Virgil, Æneid. XI. v. 111.*

And now th' infernal realm his theme he shakes,
 The reign of Pluto, the tartarean lakes,
 The furies dreadful with their curling snakes.
 He gathers omens from each bird that flies,
 And signs from ev'ry wing that beats the skies.
 He now describes a banquet, where the guest
 Prolongs with narratives the royal feast.
 Or at the glorious hero's tomb we read
 Of games ordain'd in honour of the dead.
 And oft' for mercies in old times display'd,
 To their own gods their annual rites are paid.
 For monstrous Python slain; their praises rise,
 And lift the fame of Phoebus to the skies.
 In hymns Alcides' labours they resound,
 While Cacus lies extended on the ground,
 Alternate sing the labours of his hands,
 Enjoin'd by fierce Erycinus' stern commands;
 The den of Chæus crowns the grateful strain,
 Where the grim monster breathes his flames in vain.

Mark how sometimes the bard without control
 Exerts his fire, and pours forth all his soul;
 His lines so daring, and his words so strong,
 We see the subject figur'd in the song:
 When with the winds old Æ Ocean he deforms,
 Or paints the rage and horrors of the storms;
 Or drives on pointed rocks the bursting ships,
 Tost on the ætine, or sicilian deeps.
 Or sings the † plagues that blast the livid sky,
 When beasts by herds, and men by nations die;
 Or the fierce flames † that Ætna's jaws expire,
 Her melted rocks, and deluges of fire,

When

‡ *Æneid*, Lib. I. † *Ib.*, Lib. III. v. 137. † *Ib.*, v. 571.

When from her mouth the bursting vapour flies,
And, charg'd with ruin, thunders to the skies ;
While drifts of smoke in sooty whirlwinds play,
And clouds of cinders stain the golden day.
See ! as the poet sounds the dire alarms,
Calls on the war, and sets the hosts in arms ;
Squadrons on squadrons driven, confusion die ;
Grim Mars in all his terrors strikes the eye ;
More than description rising to the sight,
Presents the real horrors of the fight ;
A new creation seems our praise to claim ;
(Hence Greece derives the sacred & poet's name ;)
The dreadful clang of clashing arms we hear ;
The agonizing groan, the fruitless pray'r,
And shrieks of suppliants thicken on the ear.
Who, when he reads a || city storm'd, forbears
To feel her woes, and sympathize in tears ?
When o'er the palaces the flames aspire
From wall to wall, and wrap the domes in fire ?
The fire, with years and hostile rage oppress !
The starting infant, clinging to the breast !
The trembling mother runs, with piercing cries
Thro' friends and foes, and shrieking rends the skies.
Drag'd from the altar, the distracted fair
Beats her white breast, and tears her golden hair.
Here in thick crowds the vanquish'd fly away,
There the proud victors heap the wealthy prey ;
With rage relentless ravage their abodes,
Nor spare the sacred temples of the gods.
O'er the whole town they run with wild affright,
Tumultuous haste, and violence of flight.

Why

I A tũ anhi

¶ Vid. *Æneid*, Lib. II.

Why should I mention how our souls aspire,
 Lost in the raptures of the sacred fire?
 For ev'n the soul not always holds the same,
 But knows at diff'rent times a diff'rent frame,
 Whether with rolling seasons she complies,
 Turns with the sun, or changes with the skies;
 Or thro' long toil, remissive of her steps,
 Droops with the mortal frame her force inspires;
 Or that our minds alternately appear
 Now bright with joy, and now o'ercast with care.
 No!----but the gods, th' immortal gods supply
 The glorious fires; they speak the deity.
 Then blest is he who waits th' auspicious nod,
 The warmth divine, and presence of the god;
 Who his suspended labours can restrain,
 'Till heaven's serene indulgence smiles again.
 But strive, on no pretence, against your pow'r,
 'Till time brings back the voluntary hour.
 Sometimes their verdant honours leave the woods,
 And their dry urns defraud the thirsty floods;
 Nor still the rivers a full channel yield,
 Nor spring with flow'ry beauties paints the field;
 The bards no less such sickle changes find,
 Damp't is the noble ardor of the mind;
 Their wonted toil her wearied pow'rs refuse;
 Their souls grow slack and languid to the muse,
 Deaf to their call; their efforts are withstood;
 Round their cold hearts congeals the freezing blood.
 You'd think the muses fled; the god no more
 Would fire the bosom where he dwelt before,
 No more return! ---how often, tho' in vain,
 The poet would renew the wonted strain!

Nor

Nor sees the gods who thwart his fruitless care,
 Nor angry heav'n relentless to his pray'r.
 Some read the antient bards, of deathless fame,
 And from their raptures catch the noble flame
 By just degrees ; they feed the glowing vein,
 And all th' immortal ardor burns again
 In its full light and heat ; the sun's bright ray
 Thus, (when the clouds disperse) restores the day :
 Whence shot this sudden flash that gilds the pole ?
 The god, the god comes rushing on his soul ;
 Fires with æthereal vigor ev'ry part,
 Thro' ev'ry trembling limb he seems to dart,
 Works in each vein, and swells his rising heart. }
 Deep in his breast the heav'nly tumult plays,
 And sets his mounting spirits on a blaze.
 Nor can the raging flames themselves contain,
 For the whole god descends into the man.
 He quits mortality, he knows no bounds,
 But sings inspir'd in more than human sounds.
 Nor from his breast can shake th' immortal load,
 But pants and raves impatient of the god ;
 And, rapt beyond himself, admires the force
 That drives him on reluctant to the course.
 He calls on Phœbus, by the god oppress'd,
 Who breathes excessive spirit in his breast ;
 No force of thirst or hunger can controul
 The fierce, the ruling transport of his soul.
 Oft' in their sleep inspir'd with rage divine,
 Some bards enjoy the visions of the nine :
 Visions ! themselves with due applause may crown,
 Visions ! that Phœbus or that Jove may own.

To such an height the god exalts the flame,
 And so unbounded is their thirst of fame.
 But here, ye youths, exert your timely care,
 Nor trust th' ungovernable rage too far ;
 Use not your fortune, nor unfurl your sails,
 Tho' softly courted by the flatt'ring gales,
 Refuse them still ; and call your judgment in,
 While the fierce god exults and reigns within ;
 To reason's standard be your thoughts confin'd,
 Let judgment calm the tempest of the mind.
 Indulge your heat with conduct, and restrain ;
 Learn when to draw, and when to give the rein.
 But always wait 'till the warm raptures cease,
 And lull the tumults of the soul to peace ;
 Then, nor 'till then, examine strictly o'er
 What your wild fallies might suggest before.

Be sure, from nature never to depart ;
 To copy nature is the task of art.
 The noblest poets own her sov'reign sway,
 And ever follow where she leads the way.
 From her the diff'rent characters they trace,
 That mark the human or the salvage race,
 Each various and distinct ; in every stage
 They paint mankind ; their humours, sex, and age ;
 They shew what manners the slow sage become,
 What the brisk youth in all his sprightly bloom.
 In ev'ry word and sentiment explain,
 How the proud monarch differs from the swain.
 I nauseate all confounded characters,
 Where young Telemachus too grave appears,
 Or reverend Nestor acts beneath his years.



}
}

The poet suits his speeches, when he sings,
 To proper persons, and the state of things ;
 On each their just distinctions are bestow'd,
 To mark a male, a female, or a god.
 Thus when in * heav'n seditious tumults rise,
 Amongst the radiant senate of the skies,
 The fire of gods, and sov'reign of mankind,
 In a few words unfolds his sacred mind.
 Not so fair Venus ; who at large replies,
 And pities Troy, and counts her miseries,
 Woes undeserv'd : but with contention fir'd,
 And with the spirit of revenge inspir'd,
 Fierce Juno storms amidst the blest abodes,
 And stuns with loud complaints the list'ning gods.
 When youthful || Turnus the stern combat claims,
 His rising heart is fill'd with martial flames :
 Impell'd by rage, and bent to prove his might,
 His soul springs forward, and prevents the fight ;
 Rouz'd to revenge, his kindling spirits glow,
 Confirm his challenge, and provoke the foe,
 The fugitive of Troy.---But while his rage
 And youthful courage prompts him to engage,
 On Latium's king incumbent it appears,
 Grown old in prudence, piety, and years,
 To weigh events, and youthful heat assuage,
 With the cold caution and the fears of age.
 In Dido's various character is seen,
 The furious lover and the gracious queen :
 When Troy's fam'd chief, commanded from above,
 Prepares to quit her kingdom and her love ;

E 2

She

* Vid. *Æneid*, Lib. X. || Ibid. Lib. XII. v. 9.

She raves, she storms with unavailing care,
 Grown wild with grief, and frantick with despair.
 Thro' every street she flies, with anguish stung,
 And broken accents flutter on her tongue ;
 Her words confus'd, and interrupted flow,
 Speak and express the hurry of her woe.
 How in this Dido is that Dido lost,
 Who late receiv'd the trojans on her coast,
 And bade them banish grief, and share her throne,
 Dismiss their fears, and think her realms their own!

Next the great orators consult, and thence
 Draw all the moving turns of eloquence ;
 That * Sirion may his phrygian foes betray,
 And lead the crowd, as fraud directs the way ;
 That wise † Ulysses may the Greeks detain,
 While Troy yet stood, from meas'ring back the main:
 Need I name ‡ Nestor, who could talk to peace,
 With melting words, the factious kings of Greece ?
 Whose soft address their fury could controul,
 Mould every passion, and subdue the soul !
 These soothing arts to || Venus sure were known,
 To beg immortal arms to grace her son ;
 Her injur'd spouse each thrilling word inspires,
 With every pang of love to second her desires.
 With nicest art the fair adul'tress draws
 Her fond addressees from a distant cause ;
 And all her guileful accents are design'd
 To catch his passions, and ensnare his mind,
 'Tis hence the poet learns in every part
 To bend the soul, and give with wondrous art
 A thousand different motions to the heart.

Hence,

* Vid. *Æneid*. Lib. II.

† *Hom. Iliad*, Lib. II.

|| *Æneid*. Lib. VIII. v. 370.

‡ *Iliad*. Lib. I. vers. 246.

Hence, as his subject gay or sad appears,
 He claims our joy, or triumphs in our tears.
 Who, when he sees how || Orpheus' sorrows flow,
 Weeps not his tears, and answers woe for woe?
 When he his dear Eurydice deplores
 To the deaf rocks, and solitary shores;
 With the soft harp the bard relieves his pain,
 For thee, when morning dawns, prolongs the strain,
 For thee, when Phæbus seeks the seas again,
 Or when the young † Euryalus is kill'd,
 And rolls in death along the bloody field;
 Like some fair flow'r beneath the share he lies,
 His head declin'd, and drooping as he dies;
 The reader's soul is touch'd with gen'rous woe,
 He longs to rush with Nisus on the foe;
 He burns with friendly pity to the dead,
 To raise the youth, and prop his sinking head;
 And strives in vain to stop the gushing blood,
 That stains his bosom with a purple flood.

But if the bard such images pursues,
 That raise the blushes of the virgin-muse;
 Let them be slightly touch'd, and ne'er express,
 Give but an hint, and let us guess the rest.
 If Jove commands the gath'ring storms to rise,
 And with deep thunders rends the vaulted skies,
 To the same cave together may repair
 The trojan † hero and the tyrian fair.
 The poet's modesty must add no more;
 Enough, that earth had giv'n the sign before;
 The conscious æther was with flames o'erspread,
 The nymphs ran shrieking round the mountain's head.

Virgil, *Georgic*, Lib. IV.
Nor
E 3
† *Æneid*, Lib. IX. v. 433.
v. 464.
† Ibid. Lib. IV. v. 165.

Nor let young Troilus, unhappy boy,
 Meet fierce Achilles in the plains of Troy ;
 But shew th' unequal youth's untimely fall,
 To great Æneas on the tyrian wall ;
 Supine and hanging from his empty car,
 Drag'd by his panting coursers thro' the war.
 This, from our bright examples you may trace,
 To write with judgment, decency, and grace ;
 From others learn invention to encrease,
 And search in chief the glorious sons of Greece ;
 For her bright treasures Argos' realms explore,
 Bring home triumphant all her gather'd store,
 And with her spoils enrich the latian shore. }
 Nor is the glory of translation less,
 To give the grecian bards a roman dress,
 If Phœbus' gracious smiles the labour crown,
 Than if some new invention were your own.
 Mincio's and Manto's glorious son behold,
 Th' immortal VIRGIL, sheath'd in foreign gold,
 Shines out unsham'd, and tow'rs above the rest,
 In the rich spoils of godlike HOMER drest.
 Let Greece in triumph boast that she imparts
 To Latium's conqu'ring realms her glorious arts ;
 While Latium's sons improve her best designs,
 'Till by degrees each polish'd labour shines, . .
 While Rome advances now in arts, as far
 Above all cities, as of old in war.

Ye gods of Rome, ye guardian deities,
 Who lift our nation's glory to the skies ;
 And thou, Apollo, the great source of Troy,
 Let Rome at least this single palm enjoy,

To shine in arts supreme, as once in pow'r,
 And teach the nations she subdu'd before ;
 Since discord all Ausonia's kings alarms,
 And clouds the antient glories of her arms.
 In our own breasts we sheath the civil sword,
 Our country naked to a foreign lord ;
 Which lately prostrate, started from despair,
 Burn'd with new hopes, and arm'd her hands for war ;
 But arm'd in vain ;----th' inexorable hate
 Of envious Fortune call'd her to her fate,
 Insatiate in her rage ; her frowns oppose
 The latian fame, and woes are heap'd on woes.
 Our dread alarms each foreign monarch took,
 Thro' all their tribes the distant nations shook ;
 To earth's last bounds the fame of LEO runs,
 Nile heard, and Indus trembled for his sons.
 Arabia heard the MEXICAN line,
 The first of men, and sprung from race divine.
 The sovereign priest, and mitred king appears
 With his lov'd JULIUS join'd, who kindly shares
 The reins of empire, and the publick cares. }
 To break their country's chains, the gen'rous pair
 Concert their schemes, and meditate the war.
 On LEO Europe's monarchs turn their eyes,
 On him alone the western world relies ;
 And each bold chief attends his dread alarms,
 While the proud crescent fades before his arms.
 High on his splendid car, immortal Rome,
 Thine eyes had seen the holy warrior come, }
 Lord of the vanquish'd world, in triumph home. }
 Thy streams, old Tyber, swell'd with conscious pride,
 Had born thy kindred warrior down thy tide ;

While

While crowded up in heaps, thy waves admire
 The captive nations, and their strange attire ;
 Behind his wheels should march a num'rous train
 Of scepter'd slaves, reluctant to the chain, }
 Forget their haughty threats, and boast in vain.
 Tho' the proud foe, of Jury's realm posselt,
 Has spread his wide dominion thro' the east ;
 Sees his dread standard there at large unfurl'd,
 And grasps in thought the empire of the world ;
 And now (ye gods) increast in barb'rous pow'r,
 His armies hover o'er th' hesperian shore.
 To see the passing pomp, the ravisht throng
 Thro' every street should flow in tides along ;
 The sacred father, as the numbers roll'd,
 Should his dear citizens again behold, }
 High o'er the shouting crouds enthron'd in gold ;
 Should shew the trophies of his glorious toils,
 And hang the shrines with consecrated spoils.
 Piles of barbarick gold should glitter there,
 The wealth of kingdoms, and the pomp of war
 But, by your crime, ye gods, our hopes are crost,
 And those imaginary triumphs lost ;
 Interr'd with Læo, in one fatal hour,
 Our prospects perish'd, as they liv'd before.

The END of the SECOND BOOK.



VIDA.

V I D A ' s

ART of POETRY, &c.

B O O K III.

WHAT stile, what language suits the poet's lays,
To claim Apollo's and the muses praise,
I now unfold ; to this last bound I tend,
And see my promis'd labours at an end.

First then, with care a just expression chuse,
Led by the kind indulgence of the muse,
To dress up ev'ry subject when you write,
And set all objects in a proper light.

But lest the distant prospect of the goal
Should damp your vigor, and your strength controul,
Rouse ev'ry power, and call forth all the soul.

See! how the mine the panting youth invite,
With one loud voice to reach Parnassus' height ;
See! how they hold aloft th' immortal crowns,
To urge the course, and call the victor on ;
See! from the clouds each lavish goddess pours,
Full o'er thy head, a sudden spring of show'rs,
And roses fall in odorif'rous show'rs ;
Celestial scents, in balmy breezes fly,
And shed ambrosial spirits from the sky.

In chief avoid obscurity, nor shroud
 Your thoughts and dark conceptions in a cloud ;
 For † some, we know, - affect to shun the light,
 Lost in forc'd figures, and involv'd in night,
 Studious and bent to leave the common way,
 They skulk in darkness, and abhor the day.
 Oh ! may the sacred nine inspire my lays
 To shine with pride in their own native rays ;
 For this we need not importune the skies,
 In our own pow'r and will the blessing lies.
 Expression, boundless in extent, displays
 A thousand forms, a thousand several ways ;
 In diff'rent garbs from diff'rent quarters brought,
 It makes unnumber'd dresses for a thought ;
 Such vast varieties of hues we find
 To paint conception, and unfold the mind !
 If e'er you toil, but toil without success,
 To give your images a shining dress,
 Quit your pursuit, and chuse a diff'rent way,
 'Till breaking forth, the voluntary ray
 Cuts the thick darkness, and lets down the day.

Since then a thousand forms you may pursue,
 A thousand figures rising to the view,
 Unless confin'd and streighten'd in your scheme,
 With the short limits of a scanty theme,
 From these to those with boundless freedom pass,
 And to each image give a diff'rent face.
 The readers hence a wond'rous pleasure find,
 That charms the ear, and captivates the mind ;
 In this the laws of nature we obey,
 And act as her example points the way,

Which

† *Perfius* and *Lycophron*.

Which has on ev'ry diff'rent species thrown
A shape distinct and figure of its own ;
Man differs from the beast that haunts the woods,
The bird from ev'ry native of the floods.

See how the poet banishes with grace
A native term to give a || stranger place !
From different images with just success
He cloaths his matter in the borrow'd dress,
The borrow'd dress the things themselves admire,
And wonder whence they drew the strange attire ;
Proud of their ravisht spoils, they now disclaim
Their former colour, and their genuine name,
And in another garb more beauteous grown,
Prefer the foreign habit to their own.
Oft' as he paints a battle on the plain,
The battle's imag'd by the roaring main ;
Now he the fight a fiery deluge names,
That pours along the fields a flood of flames ;
In airy conflict now the winds appear,
Alarm the deeps, and wage the stormy war ;
To the fierce shock th' embattel'd tempests pour,
Waves charge on waves, th' encount'ring billows roar.
Thus in a vary'd dress the subject shines,
By turns the objects shift their proper signs ;
From shape to shape alternately they run,
To borrow other's charms, and lend their own ;
Pleas'd with the borrow'd charms, the readers find
A crowd of diff'rent images combin'd,
Rise from a single object to the mind.
So the pleas'd trav'ler, from a mountain's brow,
Views the calm surface of the seas below ;

Tho'

|| *The Metaphor.*

Tho' wide beneath the floating ocean lies
 The first immediate object of his eyes,
 He sees the forests tremble from within,
 And gliding meadows paint the deeps with green ;
 While to his eyes the fair delusions pass
 In gay succession thro' the watry glass.
 'Tis thus the bard diversifies his song,
 Now here, now there, he calls the soul along.
 The rich variety, he sets to fight,
 Cloys not the mind, but adds to our delight.
 Now with a frugal choice the bard affords
 The strongest light, and energy of words ;
 While humble subjects, he contrives to raise
 With borrow'd splendors, and a foreign blaze.
 This, if on old tradition we rely,
 Was once the current language of the sky ;
 Which first the muses brought to these abodes,
 Who taught mankind the secrets of the gods.
 For in the court of Jove their choirs advance,
 And sing alternate, as they lead the dance,
 Mixt with the gods ; they hear Apollo's lyre,
 And from high heav'n the panting bard inspire.
 Nor bards alone, but other writers reach
 This bold, this daring privilege of speech ;
 In chief the orators, to raise their sense,
 In this strong figure dress their eloquence,
 When with persuasive strokes they plead a cause,
 And bridle vice, and vindicate the laws ;
 Or on the dreadful verge of death defend,
 And snatch from fate a poor devoted friend.
 Ev'n the rough hinds delight in such a strain,
 When the glad harvest waves with golden grain,
 And thirsty meadows drink the pearly rain ;

}

On the proud vine her purple gems appear;
The smiling fields rejoyce, and hail the pregnant year,
First from necessity the figure sprung.

For things, that would not suit our scanty tongue,
When no true names were offer'd to the view,
Those they transferr'd that border'd on the true;
Thence by degrees the noble licence grew.

The bards those daring liberties embrac'd,
Thro' want at first, thro' luxury at last:
They now to alien things, at will, conferr'd
The borrow'd honours of a foreign term.

So man, at first, the rattling storm to fly,
And the bleak horrors of the wintry sky,
Rais'd up a roof of osters o'er his head,
And clos'd with homely clay the slender shed;

Now, regal palaces, of wond'rous size,
With brazen beams, on parian columns rise,
That heave the pompous fabrick to the skies.

But other writers sprinkle here and there
These bolder beauties with a frugal care;

So vast a freedom is allow'd to none,
But suits the labours of the bard alone,
Who in the laws of verse himself restrains,
Ty'd up to time in voluntary chains.

Others, by no restraint or stop with-held,
May range the compass of a wider field;
The sacred poets, who their labours fill
With pleasing fictions, or with truths at will,
Their thoughts in bolder liberties express,
Which look more beauteous in a foreign dress.

To all, unusual colours they impart,
Nor blush, if e'er detected in their art.

* Sometimes beyond the bounds of truth they fly,
 And boldly lift their subject to the sky;
 When with tumultuous shouts the heav'ns rebound,
 And all Olympus trembles with the sound.
 Or with repeated accents they relate
 The fall of Troy, and dwell upon her fate;
 † Oh fire! oh country, once with glory crown'd!
 Oh wretched race of Priam, once renown'd!
 Oh Jove! see Ilion smoking on the ground!

They now name Ceres for the golden grain,
 Bacchus for wine, and Neptune for the main:
 Or from the father's name point out the son;
 Or for her people introduce a town:
 So when alarm'd her natives dread their fates,
 Pale Africk shakes, and trembles thro' her states:
 And some, by Achelous' streams alone,
 Comprise the floods of all the world in one.

† Lo! now they start aside, and change the strain
 To fanci'd converse with an absent swain;
 To grotts and caverns all their cares disclose,
 Or tell the solitary rocks their woes;
 To scenes inanimate proclaim their love,
 Talk with an hill, or whisper to a grove.
 On you they call, ye unattentive woods,
 And wait an answer from your bord'ring floods.

|| Sometimes they speak one thing, but leave behind
 Another secret meaning in the mind;
 A fair expression artfully dispense,
 But use a word that clashes with the sense.

Thus

* The *Hyperbole*.

† *Hæc verba ex incerti nominis Poetâ citat Cicero*

† The *Apophthegm*.

|| The *Irony*.

‡ Thus pious Helen stole the faithful sword,
While Troy was flaming, from her sleeping lord.
|| So glorious Drances tow'r'd amid the plain,
And pil'd the ground with mountains of the slain;
Immortal trophies rais'd from squadrons kill'd,
And with vast spoils ennobled all the field.

† But now to mention farther I forbear,
With what strong charms they captivate the ear;
When the same terms they happily repeat,
The same repeated seem more soft and sweet.
This, * were Arcadia judge, if Pan withstood,
Pan's judge Arcadia would condemn her god.

But tho' our fond indulgence grants the muse
A thousand liberties in diff'rent views,
When-e'er you chuse an image to express
In foreign terms, and scorn the native dress;
Yet be discreet, nor strain the point too far,
Let the transition still unforc'd appear,
Nor e'er discover an excess of care:
For some, we know, with aukward violence
Distort the subject, and disjoint the sense;
Quite change the genuine figure, and deface
The native shape with ev'ry living grace;
And force unwilling objects to put on
An alien face, and features not their own.
A low conceit in disproportion'd terms,
Looks like a boy dress'd up in giants arms;
Blind to the truth, all reason they exceed,
§ Who name a stall the palace of the steed,
Or graze the tresses of great Rhæa's head.

F 2

'Tis

‡ See *Virg. Æneid*, Lib. † The *Anaphora*.
VI. * See *Virg. Eclog.* IV.
|| Ibid. Lib. XI. § The *Catachresis*.

'Tis best sometimes an image to express
 In its own colours, and its native dress ;
 The genuine words with happy care to use,
 If nicely cull'd, and worthy of the muse.

Some things alternately compar'd are shown,
 Both names still true, and mutually their own ;
 But here the least redundancy you must shun ;
 Tell us in short, from whence the hint you drew,
 And set the whole comparison to view ;
 Left, mindless of your first design, you seem
 To lead the mind away, and rove from theme to theme.

But now pursue the method, that affords
 The fittest terms, and wisest choice of words,
 Not all deserve alike the same regard,
 Nor suit the god-like labours of the bard ;
 For words as much may differ in degree,
 As the most various kinds of poetry.
 Tho' many a common term and word we find
 Dispers'd promiscuously thro' ev'ry kind.
 Those that will never suit th' heroick rage,
 Might grace the buskin, and become the stage.
 Their large, their vast variety explore
 With piercing eyes, and range the mighty store.
 From their deep fund the richest words unfold,
 With nicest care be each expression cull'd,
 To deck your numbers in the purest gold.
 The vile, the dark degen'rate crowd refuse,
 And scorn a dress that would disgrace the muse,
 Then to succeed your search, pursue the road,
 And beat the track the glorious antients trod.
 To those eternal monuments repair,
 There read, and meditate for ever there.

If o'er the rest some mighty genius shines,
 Mark the sweet charms, and vigor of his lines.
 As far as Phœbus and the heav'nly pow'r
 Smile on your labours, make his diction your's;
 Your style by his authentick standard frame,
 Your voice, your habit, and address the same.
 With him proceed to cull the rest; for there
 A full reward will justify your care.
 Examine all; and bring from all away
 Their various treasures as a lawful prey.
 Nor would I scruple, with a due regard,
 To read sometimes a rude unpolish'd bard;
 Among whose labours I may find a line,
 Which from unsightly rust I may refine,
 And, with a better grace, adopt it into mine.
 How often may we see a troubled flood
 Stain'd with unsettled ooze and rising mud?
 Which, (if a well the bord'ring natives sink)
 Supplies the thirsty multitude with drink.
 The trickling stream by just degrees refines,
 'Till in its course the limpid current shines;
 And taught thro' secret labyrinths to flow,
 Works itself clear among the sands below.
 For nothing looks so gloomy, but will shine
 From proper care, and timely discipline;
 If, with due vigilance and conduct, wrought
 Deep in the soul, it labours in the thought.
 Hence on the antients we must rest alone,
 And make their golden sentences our own.
 To cull their best expressions claims our cares,
 To form our notions, and our styles on their's.

}

See! how we bear away their precious spoils,
 And with the glorious dress enrich our styles;
 Their bright inventions for our use convey,
 Bring all the spirit of their words away,
 And make their words themselves our lawful prey! }
 Unsham'd in other colours to be shown,
 We speak our thoughts in accents not our own:
 But your design with modest caution weigh,
 Steal with due care, and meditate the prey.
 Invert the order of the words with art,
 And change their former site in ev'ry part.
 Thus win your readers, thus deceive with grace,
 And let th'expression wear a diff'rent face;
 Yourself at last, the glorious labour done,
 Will scarce discern his diction from your own.
 Some, to appear of diffidence bereft,
 Steal in broad day, and glory in the theft;
 When with just art, design, and confidence,
 On the same words they graft a diff'rent sense;
 Preserve th'unvary'd terms and order too,
 But change their former spirit for a new.
 Or, with the sense of emulation bold,
 With ancient bards a glorious contest hold:
 Their richest spoils triumphant they explore,
 Which, rang'd with better grace, they varnish o'er, }
 And give them charms they never knew before.
 So trees, that change their soils, more proudly rise,
 And lift their spreading honours to the skies;
 And, when transplanted, nobler fruits produce,
 Exalt their nature, and ferment their juice.
 So Troy's fam'd chief the asian empire bore,
 With better omens, to the latian shore;

VIRGIL'S Art of Poetry.

61

Tho' from thy realm, O Dido, to the sea
Call'd by the gods reluctantly away ;
Nor the first nuptial pleasures could controul
The fixt, the stubborn purpose of his soul.
Unhappy queen ! thy woes suppress thy breath ;
Thy cares pursu'd thee, and surviv'd in death.
Had not the dardan fleet thy kingdom sought,
Thy life had shone unfull'd with a fault.

Come then, ye youths, and urge your gen'rous toils ;
Come, strip the antients, and divide the spoils
Your hands have won----but shun the fault of such,
Who with fond rashness trust themselves too much.
For some, we know, who by their pride betray'd,
With vain contempt reject a foreign aid ;
Who scorn those great examples to obey,
Nor follow where the antients point the way.
While from the theft their cautious hands refrain,
Vain are their fears, their superstition vain.
Nor Phœbus' smiles th' unhappy poet crown ;
The fate of all his works prevents his own.
Himself his mould'ring monument survives,
And sees his labours perish while he lives :
His fame is more contracted than his span,
And the frail author dies before the man.
How would he wish the labour to forbear,
And follow other arts with more successful care ?

I like a fair allusion nicely wrought ;
When the same words express a different thought.
And such a theft true critics dare not blame,
Which late posterity shall crown with fame.
Void of all fear, of ev'ry doubt bereft,
I would not blush, but triumph in the theft.

Nor



V I D A's *Art of Poetry*!

Nor on the antients for the whole rely,
The whole is more than all their works supply;
Some things your own invention must explore,
Some virgin images untouch'd before.

New terms no laws forbid us to induce,
To coin a word, and sanctify to use;
But yet admit no words into the song,
Unless they prove the stock from whence they sprung;
Point out their family, their kindred trace,
And set to view the series of their race.
But where you find your native tongue too poor,
Transport the riches of the grecian store;
Inform the lump, and work it into grace,
And with new life inspire th' unwieldy mass;
'Till chang'd by discipline, the word puts on
A foreign nature, and forgets its own.
So Latium's language found a rich increase,
And grew and flourish'd from the wealth of Greece;
'Till use, in time, had rifled Argos' stores,
And brought all Athens to th' hesperian shores.
How many words from rich Mycenæ come,
Of greek extraction, in the dress of Rome?
That live with ours, our rights and freedom claim,
Their nature diff'rent, but their looks the same;
Thro' Latium's realms, in Latium's garb they go,
At once her strangers, and her natives too.
Long has her poverty been fled, and long
With native riches has she grac'd her tongue.
Nor search the poets only, but explore
Immortal TULLY's inexhausted store;
And other authors, born in happier days,
Shall answer all your wants, and beautify your lays.

Of,

Of, in old bards, a verse above the rest,
Shines, in barbarick spoils and trophies dress'd :
Thus Gaul, her victor's triumph to compleat,
Supplies those words that paint her own defeat ;
And vanquish'd Macedon, to tell her doom,
Gives up her language with her arms to Rome.
Then can we fear with groundless diffidence
A want of words that shall express our sense ?

But if compell'd by want, you may produce
And bring an antiquated word in use ;
A word earst well-receiv'd in days of yore,
A word our old forefathers us'd before :
Well-pleas'd the reader's wonder to engage,
He brings our grandfathers habit on the stage,
And garbs that whilom grac'd an uncouth age.
Yet must not such appear in ev'ry place ;
When rang'd too thick, the poem they disgrace.
Since of new words such numbers you command,
Deal out the old ones with a sparing hand.
‡ When-e'er your images can lay no claim
To a fixt term, and want a certain name ;
To paint one thing, the licens'd bard affords
A pompous circle, and a crowd of words.

Two plighted words, in one with grace appear,
When they with ease glide smoothly o'er the ear.
Two may embrace at once, but seldom more,
No verse can bear the mingled shape of four ;
Nor triple monsters dwell on Latium's shore.
When mixt with smooth, these harsher strains are found,
We start with horror at the frightful sound ;

The

‡ *The Periphrasis.*

The grecian bards, in whom such freedoms please,
 May match with more success such words as these ;
 Heap hills on hills, and bid the structure rise,
 'Till the vast pile of mountains prop the skies.

What words soever of vast bulk we view,
 One of less size may sometimes split in two ;
 Sometimes we sep'rate from the whole a part,
 And prune the more luxuriant limbs with art.
 Thus when the names of heroes we declare,
 Names whose unpolisht sounds offend the ear ;
 We add, or lop some branches which abound,
 Till the harsh accents are with smoothness crown'd,
 That mellows ev'ry word, and softens every sound. }
 By such an happy change, Sicharbas came
 To sink his roughness in Sichæus' name.
 Hence would I rather choose those dire alarms
 Of vast Enceladus, and heav'n in arms,
 And the bold Titan's battles to rehearse,
 Harmonious names, that glide into the verse ;
 Than count the rough, the barb'rous nations o'er,
 Which Rome subdu'd of old from shore to shore.

Let things submit to words, on no pretence,
 But make your words subservient to your sense ;
 Nor for their sake admit a single line,
 But what contributes to the main design.
 Thro' ev'ry part most diligently pierce,
 And weigh the sound and sense of ev'ry verse.
 Unless your strictest caution you display,
 Some words may lead the heedless bard away ;
 Steal from their duty, and desert their post,
 And skulk in darkness, indolently lost ;

Or while their proper parts their fellows ply,
 Contribute nought but sound and harmony-
 This to prevent, consult your words ; and know
 How far their strength, extent, and nature go.
 To all their charges, and their labours fit ;
 To all, their sev'ral provinces of wit.
 Without this care, the poem will abound
 With empty noise, and impotence of sound ;
 Unmeaning terms will crowd in ev'ry part,
 Play round the ear, but never reach the heart.
 Yet would I sometimes venture to disperse
 Some words, whose splendor should adorn my verse ;
 (Words, that to wit and thought have no pretence,
 And rather vehicles of sound than sense ;)
 'Till in the gorgeous dress the lines appear,
 And court with gentle harmony the ear.
 Nor with too fond a care such words pursue,
 They meet your sight, and rise in ev'ry view.
 Oft, from its chains the shackled verse unloose,
 And give it liberty to walk in prose ;
 Then be the work renew'd with endless pain,
 And join with care the shatter'd parts again ;
 The lurking faults and errors you may see,
 When the words run unmanacled and free.

Attend, young bard, and listen while I sing ;
 Lo ! I unlock the muses sacred spring ;
 Lo ! Phœbus calls thee to his inmost shrine ;
 Hark ! in one common voice, the tuneful nine
 Invite and court thee to the rites divine.
 When first to man the privilege was giv'n,
 To hold by verse an intercourse with heav'n,

Unwilling

Unwilling that th' immortal art should lye
 Cheap, and expos'd to ev'ry vulgar eye,
 Great Jove, to drive away the grow'ling crowd,
 To narrow bounds confin'd the glorious road,
 Which more exalted spirits may pursue,
 And left it open to the sacred few.
 For many a painful task, in ev'ry part,
 Claims all the poet's vigilance and art.
 'Tis not enough his verses to compicat,
 In measure, numbers, or determin'd feet ;
 Or render things, by clear expression, bright,
 And set each object in a proper light :
 To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,
 And make the sound a picture of the sense ;
 The correspondent words exactly frame,
 The look, the features, and the mien the same.
 His thoughts the bard must suitably express,
 Each in a diff'rent face, and diff'rent dress ;
 Left in unvari'd looks the crowd be shown,
 And the whole multitude appear as one.
 With rapid feet and wings, without delay,
 This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away :
 That, vast of size, his limbs huge, broad and strong,
 Moves pond'rous, and scarce drags his bulk along.
 This, blooms with youth and beauty in his face,
 And Venus breathes on ev'ry limb a grace :
 That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,
 Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows ;
 His monstrous tail in many a fold and wind,
 Voluminous and vast, curls up behind :
 At once the image and the lines appear
 Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.

Nor

Nor are those figures giv'n without a cause,
 But fixt and settled by determin'd laws ;
 All claim and wear, as their deserts are known,
 A voice, a face, and habit of their own.
 † Lo ! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,
 And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,
 Incumbent on the main, that roars around ;
 Beneath their lab'ring ears the waves rebound,
 The prows wide-echoing thro' the dark profound :
 To the loud call each distant rock replies,
 Toft by the storm the frothy surges rise ;
 While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore,
 Dashed from the strand, the flying waters roar,
 Flash at the shock, and gath'ring in an heap,
 The liquid mountains rise, and over-hang the deep.
 See thro' her shores Triacria's realms rebound,
 Starting and trembling at the bellowing sound ;
 High-tow'ring o'er the waves the mountains ride,
 And clash with floating mountains on the tide.
 But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,
 And calms at one regard the raging seas ;
 Stretcht like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,
 And o'er the level light the galley glides.
 The poet's art and conduct we admire,
 When angry Vulcan rolls a flood of fire ;
 When on the groves and fields the deluge rains,
 And wraps the crackling stubble in the blaze.
 Nor less our pleasure, when the flame divides,
 And climbs aspiring round the cauldron's sides ;

G

From

† Most of these examples are drawn word for word from
 Virgil.

From the dark bottom work the waters up,
 Swell, boil, and hiss, and bubble to the top.
 Thus in smooth lines, smooth subjects we rehearse,
 But the † rough rock roars in as rough a verse.
 If gay the subject, gay must be the song;
 And the brisk numbers quickly glide along:
 When the fields flourish; or the skies unfold
 Swift from the flying hinge their gates of gold.
 If sad the theme, then each grave line moves slow,
 The mournful numbers languishingly flow,
 And drag, and labour, with a weight of woe: }
 If e'er the boding bird of night, who mourns
 O'er ruins, desolation, graves, and urns,
 With piercing screams the darkness should invade,
 And break the silence of the dismal shade.
 When things are small, the terms should still be so;
 For low words please us, when the theme is low.
 But when some giant, horrible and grim,
 Enormous in his gait, and vast in ev'ry limb,
 Stalks tow'ring on; the swelling words must rise
 In just proportion to the monster's size.
 If some large weight his huge arms strive to shove,
 The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move.
 When each stiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough,
 Crumbles and breaks; th'encumber'd lines march slow.
 Nor less; when pilots catch the friendly gales,
 Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretcht sails.
 But if the poem suffers from delay,
 Let the lines fly precipitate away.

And

† ----- *Sonat bæc de nare caninâ**Littera,**Vid. Perfum.*

And when the viper issues from the brake ;
 Be quick ; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack }
 His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.
 When night descends ; or stun'd by num'rous strokes,
 And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox ;
 The line too sinks with correspondent sound,
 Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.
 When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,
 And hush their roarings and their rage to peace ;
 So oft we see the interrupted strain
 Stop'd in the midst,-----and with the silent main, }
 Pause for a space-----at last it glides again.
 When Priam strains his aged arm, to throw
 His unavailing jav'lin at the foe ;
 (His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unstrung,)
 Then with the theme complies the artful song ;
 Like him, the solitary numbers flow
 Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.
 Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force
 Beats down embattled armies in his course :
 The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,
 Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls ;
 Provokes his flying courser to his speed,
 In full career to charge the warlike steed ;
 He piles the field with mountains of the slain ;
 He pours, he storms, he thunders thro' the plain.
 In this the poet's justest conduct lies,
 When with his various subjects he complies, }
 To sink with judgment, and with judgment rise.
 We see him now, remissive of his force,
 Glide with a low, and inoffensive course ;

Stript of the gawdy dress of words he goes,
 And scarcely lifts the poem up from prose :
 And now he brings with loosen'd reins along
 All in a full career the boundless song ;
 In wide array luxuriantly he pours
 A crowd of words, and opens all his stores.
 The lavish eloquence redundant flows,
 Thick as the fleeces of the winter-snows,
 When Jove invests the naked Alps, and sheds
 The silent tempest on their hoary heads.
 Sometimes the god-like fury he restrains,
 Checks his impetuous speed, and draws the reins ;
 Balanc'd and pois'd, he neither sinks nor soars,
 Plows the mid space, and steers between the shores,
 And shaves the confines ;----'till, all dangers past,
 He shoots with joy into the port at last.

For what remains unsung ; I now declare
 What claims the poet's last and strictest care.
 When, all adventures past, his labours end
 In one continu'd order to their end ;
 When the proud victor on his conquest smiles,
 And safe enjoys the triumph of his toils ;
 Let him by timely diffidence be aw'd,
 Nor trust too soon th' unpolish'd piece abroad.
 Oh ! may his rash ambition ne'er inflame
 His breast, with such a dangerous thirst of fame
 But let the terror of disgrace controul
 The warm, the partial fondness of his soul ;
 And force the bard to throw his passion by,
 Nor view his offspring with a parent's eye ;
 'Till his affections are by justice cross'd,
 And all the father in the judge is lost.

Ho

V I D A's *Art of Poetry.*

21

He seeks his friends, nor trusts himself alone,
But asks their judgment, and resigns his own ;
Begs them, with urgent pray'rs, to be sincere,
Just and exact, and rigidly severe ;
Due verdict to pronounce on ev'ry thought,
Nor spare the slightest shadow of a fault ;
But, bent against himself, and strictly nice,
He thanks each critick that detects a vice ;
Tho' charg'd with what his judgment can defend,
He joins the partial sentence of his friend.
The piece thrown by ; the careful bard reviews
The long-forgotten labours of his muse :
Lo ! on all sides far diff'rent objects rise,
And a new prospect strikes his wond'ring eyes.
Warm from the brain, the lines his love engross,
Now in themselves their former selves are lost.
Now his own labours he begins to blame,
And blushing reads them with regret and shame.
He loaths the piece ; condemns it ; nor can find
The genuine stamp, and image of his mind.
This thought and that, indignant he rejects ;
When most secure, some danger he suspects ;
Anxious he adds, and trembling he corrects.
With kind severities, and timely art,
Lops the luxuriant growth of ev'ry part ;
Prunes the superfluous boughs, that wildly stray,
And cuts the rank redundancies away.
Thus arm'd with proper discipline he stands,
By day, by night, applies his healing hands,
From ev'ry line to wipe out ev'ry blot,
'Till the whole piece is guiltless of a fault.

}



VIRGIL'S *Art of Poetry.*

Hard is the task, but needful, if your aim
Tends to the prospect of immortal fame.
If some ~~ambitious~~ numbers limp behind,
When the warm poet ~~rages~~ unconfin'd,
Then when his swift invention seems to stay,
By a full tide of genius whirl'd away;
He brings the sov'reign cure their failings claim,
Confirms the sickly, and supports the lame.
Oft' as the seasons roll, renew thy pain,
And bring the poem to the test again.
In diff'rent lights th' expression must be rang'd,
The garb and colours of the words be chang'd.
With endless care thy watchful eyes must pierce,
And mark the parts distinct of ev'ry verse.
In this persist; for oft' one day denies
The kind assistance which the next supplies;
As oft', without your vigilance and care,
Some faults detected by themselves appear,
And now a thousand errors you explore,
That lay involv'd in mantling clouds before.
Oft' to improve his muse, the bard should try,
By turns, the temper of a diff'rent sky.
For thus his genius takes a diff'rent face
From every different genius of a place.
The soul too changes, and the bard may find
A thousand various motions in his mind.
New gleams of light will ev'ry moment rise,
While from each part the scatt'ring darkness flies.
And, as he alters what appears amiss,
He adds new flow'rs to beautifie the piece.
But here, ev'n here, avoid th' extreme of such,
Who with excess of care correct too much;

Whose

Whose barb'rous hands no calls of pity bound,
 While with th' infected parts they cut the sound,
 And make the cure more dang'rous than the wound. }
 'Till, all the blood and spirits drain'd away,
 The body sickens, and the parts decay;
 The native beauties die, the limbs appear
 Rough and deform'd with one continu'd scar,
 No fixt determin'd number I enjoin,
 But when some years shall perfect the design;
 Reflect on life; and, mindful of thy span,
 Whose scanty limit bounds the days of man,
 Wide o'er the spacious world, without delay,
 Permit the finish'd piece to take its way;
 'Till all mankind admires the heav'nly song,
 The theme of ev'ry hand and ev'ry tongue.
 See! thy pleas'd friends thy spreading glory draws,
 Each with his voice to swell the vast applause;
 The vast applause shall reach the starry frame,
 No years, no ages shall obscure thy fame, }
 And earth's last ends shall hear thy darling name.
 Shall we then doubt to scorn all worldly views,
 And not prefer the raptures of the muse?

Thrice happy bards! who, taught by heav'n, obey
 These rules, and follow where they lead the way;
 And hear the faithful precepts I bestow'd,
 Inspir'd with rage divine, and lab'ring with the god;
 But art alone, and human means must fail,
 Nor these instructive precepts will prevail,
 Unless the gods their present aid supply,
 And look with kind indulgence from the sky.
 I only pointed out the paths that lead
 The panting youth to steep Parnassus' head;

And

And show'd the tuneful muses from afar,
 Mixt in a solemn choir, and dancing there-
 Thither forbidden by the fates to go,
 I sink and grovel in the world below.
 Deterr'd by them, in vain I labour up,
 And stretch these hands to grasp the distant top.
 Enough for me, at distance if I view
 Some bard, some happier bard the path pursue ;
 Who, taught by me to reach Parnassus' crown,
 Mounts up, and calls his slow companions on.
 But yet these rules, perhaps, these humble lays,
 May claim a title to a share of praise ;
 When, in a crowd, the gath'ring youths shall hear
 My voice and precepts with a willing ear ;
 Close in a ring shall press the list'ning throng,
 And learn from me to regulate their song.
 Then, if the pitying fates prolong my breath,
 And from my youth avert the dart of death ;
 Whene'er I sink in life's declining stage,
 Trembling and fainting on the verge of age,
 To help their wearied master shall they run,
 And lend their friendly hands to guide him on ;
 Thro' blooming groves his tardy progress wait,
 And set him gently down at Phœbus' gate,
 The while he sings, before the hallow'd shrine,
 The sacred poets, and the tuneful nine.
 Here then in roman numbers will we rise,
 And lift the fame of VIRGIL to the skies ;
 Ausonia's pride and boast ; who brings along
 Strength to my lines, and spirit to my song :
 First how the mighty bard transported o'er
 The sacred muses from th' æonian shore ;

Led the fair sisters to th' hesperian plains,
 And sung in roman towns the grecian strains ;
 How in his youth to woods and groves he fled,
 And sweetly tun'd the soft sicilian reed ;
 Next, how in pity to th' ausonian swains,
 He rais'd to heav'n the honours of the plains ;
 Rapt in Triptolemus his car on high,
 He scatter'd peace and plenty from the sky :
 Fir'd with his country's fame, with loud alarms,
 At last he rous'd all Latium up to arms ;
 In just array the phrygian troops bestow'd,
 And spoke the voice and language of a god.
 Father of verse ! from whom our honours spring ;
 See ! from all parts, our bards attend their king ;
 Beneath thy banners rang'd, thy fame increase,
 And rear proud trophies from the spoils of Greece.
 Low, in glycian vales, her tuneful throng
 Bow to thy laurels, and adore thy song :
 On thee alone thy country turns her eyes ;
 On thee her poets future fame relies.
 See ! how in crowds they court thy aid divine ;
 (For all their honours but depend on thine,)
 Taught from the womb thy numbers to rehearse,
 And sip the balmy sweets of ev'ry verse.
 Unrival'd bard ! all ages shall decree
 The first unenvy'd palm of fame to thee ;
 Thrice happy bard ! thy boundless glory flies,
 Where never mortal must attempt to rise ;
 Such heav'nly numbers in thy song we hear,
 And more than human accents charm the ear !
 To thee, his darling, Phœbus' hands impart
 His soul, his genius, and immortal art.

What

What help or merit in these rules are shown,
 The youth must owe to thy support alone.
 The youth, whose wand'ring feet with care I led
 Aloft, o'er steep Parnassus' sacred head ;
 Taught from thy great example to explore
 Those arduous paths which thou hast trod before.
 Hail, pride of Italy ! thy country's grace !
 Hail, glorious light of all the tuneful race !
 For whom, we weave the crown, and altars raise ;
 And with rich incense bid the temples blaze ;
 Our solemn hymns shall still resound thy praise.
 Hail holy bard, and boundless in renown !
 Thy fame, dependent on thy self alone,
 Requires no song, no numbers but thy own.
 Look down propitious, and my thoughts inspire ;
 Warm my chaste bosom with thy sacred fire !
 Let all thy flames with all their raptures roll,
 Deep in my breast, and kindle all my soul !

THE END.



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